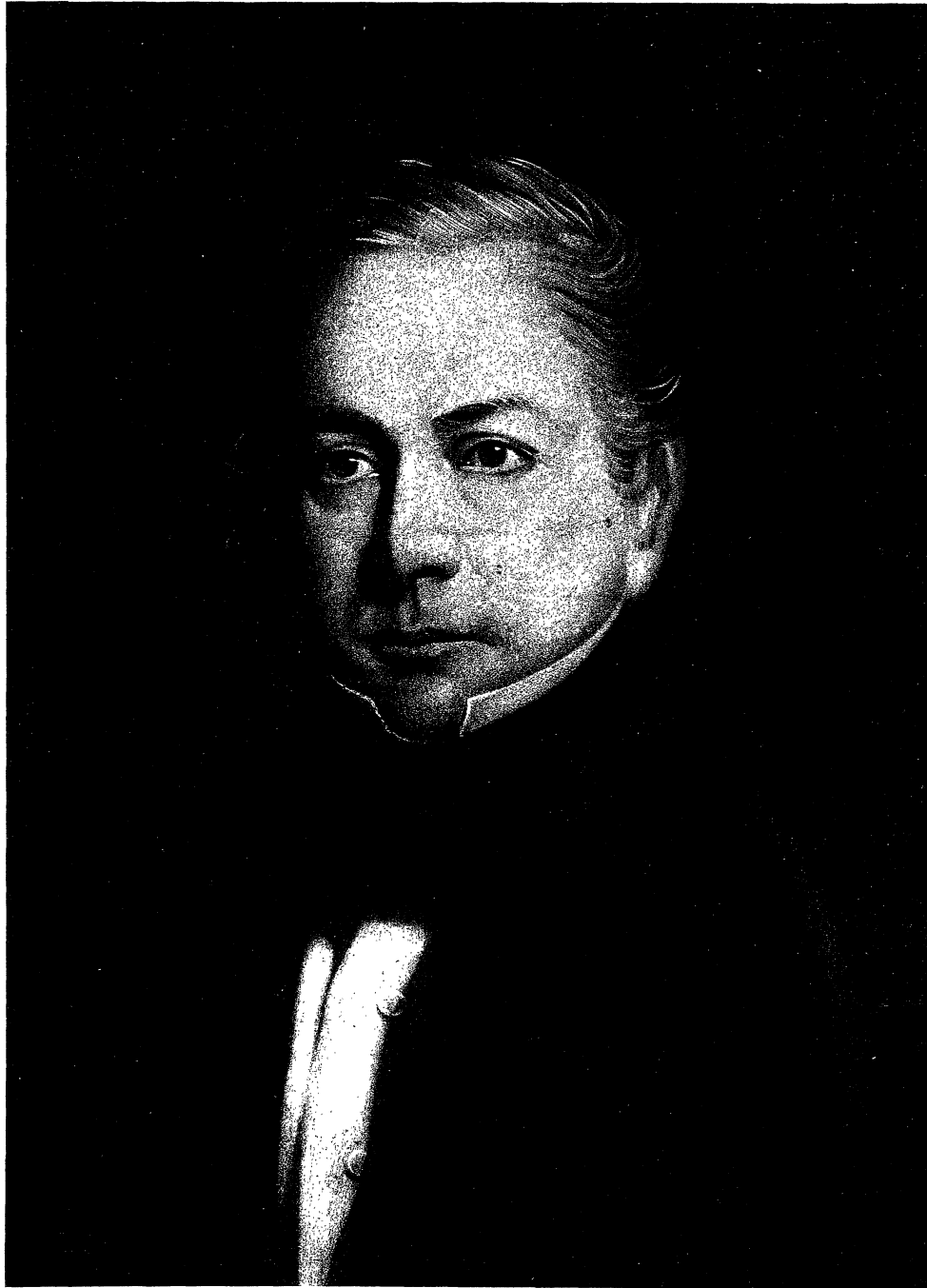




The Annals
OF
The Edinburgh Stage.



W. H. MURRAY.

From the Engraving after R. Alexander's Picture.

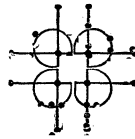
The
Annals
OF
The Edinburgh Stage

WITH AN ACCOUNT OF THE

*Rise and Progress of Dramatic Writing
in Scotland*

BY

JAMES C. DIBDIN



EDINBURGH

RICHARD CAMERON, 1 SOUTH ST DAVID STREET

1888

Edinburgh :

Printed by DAVID MACDONALD, *42 Hanover Street.*

P R E F A C E.



WORK such as the present requires little by way of preface ; its name, " The Annals of the Edinburgh Stage," being fully significant of its scope and aim. While it does not aspire to the dignity of a history, it claims to take rank apart from the numerous books in theatrical literature which, despite their names, are little better than heterogeneous collections of anecdotes and carelessly handled facts. As far as possible I have availed myself of every scrap of information bearing upon my subject ; and, from a vast amount of data accumulated during several years of constant research, I have endeavoured to extract and set down in as concise a form as possible every important date and circumstance connected with the Edinburgh Stage.

In the process of selection, I have, as was inevitable, experienced much difficulty ; and I am fully conscious that, though I have taken the utmost care to do full justice to every aspect of my subject, I may yet be accused of sins both of omission and commission ; for every reader brings an individual standard of taste to the judgment of an author, and what may interest one will doubtless be tedious to others, who in their turn will be disposed to yawn over the pet topics of the first. I have, however, striven (and I hope to some extent successfully) to furnish the table of my ordinary with a due regard to all sorts of appetites, as well as to the fact that the vast amount of ground to be gone over inevitably restricted me to representative features in the History of the Edinburgh Stage.

Particulars concerning the members of the stock companies have been carefully but briefly chronicled ; the first local productions of important plays have been constantly noted ; and, where it seemed desirable, casts have been given ; plays that have had birth on the Edinburgh Stage have received more extended notice ; while the first appearances of noted actors have been duly set down. A chronological form has been adopted, as it enabled me to give a maximum of information in a form alike concise and convenient. I am acutely sensible that my work is

not without shortcomings in many respects, such as clerical errors and mistakes. As many of these as have been detected are noted in a list of errata and corrigenda, and I will esteem it a great favour, if readers who detect other slips will inform me of them. During the course of my labours I have received much kindness and assistance from friends and strangers alike, and from one or two, services without which I could not possibly have accomplished my work. Mr Alexander E. Burnett, Writer to the Signet, Edinburgh, in the most kindly and generous manner, has on numerous occasions spared neither time nor trouble to help me out of difficulties, which only his unrivalled acquaintance with dramatic history could have surmounted; and alike for unstinted access to his valuable library, and constant advice and encouragement, I owe him my deepest gratitude. For the privilege of working in his magnificent library, as well as for much kindness and information, Mr J. Mansfield Mackenzie, Writer to the Signet, has my warmest thanks, and I have great pleasure also in recording my deep obligations to Mr James Cameron for the use of numerous scarce volumes, and other assistance. My brother, Mr E. Rimbault Dibdin, Liverpool, has given me invaluable aid and advice; the kindness I have received from Mr William Alexander Barrett, Mus. Bac., London, I cannot sufficiently acknowledge; and among many others, whose good offices have always been generously placed at my disposal, are Mr George Stronach, M.A., of the Advocates' Library, who has always proved unweariedly helpful; Mr T. G. Law, Librarian of the Signet Library; Mr H. A. Webster, of the Edinburgh University Library; the officials of the British Museum Library; the officials of the Register House, Edinburgh; Mr J. L. Toole, London; Mr R. Addison Smith, S.S.C., Edinburgh; Mr W. Archer, M.A., London; Mr A. Milligan, Edinburgh; Mr George Guthrie, M.A., Glasgow; the sisters of the late Mr W. H. Logan, Edinburgh; Mr Grant M'Neill, Edinburgh; Mr W. Traquair, S.S.C., Edinburgh; Mr J. M. Gray, Edinburgh; and Mr C. Martin Hardie, A.R.S.A. In tendering my sincere thanks to all these generous helpers, let me assure them that I do so with the fullest and most grateful appreciation of their many acts of kindness to me.

JAMES C. DIBDIN.

4 DUNDONALD STREET,
DRUMMOND PLACE, EDINBURGH,
June 30, 1888.

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ERRATA.

Page 56, lines 15 and 20, *for* "Mr" *read* "Mrs."

Page 122, line 9 from foot, *for* "O'Keefe" *read* "O'Keeffe."

Page 125, line 5, *delete* words "for the first time."

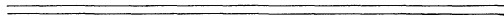
Page 157, line 8 from foot, *for* "Wood" *read* "Woods."

Page 311, line 6 from foot, *for* "Daisey Latimer" *read* "Darsie Latimer."

Page 320, line 12 from foot, *delete* words "was in the chair, and."

Page 339, line 17, *for* "Ruben" *read* "Reuben."

The Annals of the Edinburgh Stage.



F I R S T P E R I O D,

Extending to 1691.

CHAPTER I.

ORIGIN AND POPULAR DEVELOPMENT OF THE DRAMA IN SCOTLAND.



THE origin of Dramatic exhibitions in Scotland, as in other European countries, may be traced to those representations of sacred story which, under the name of Mysteries, were common throughout the greater part of Europe for several centuries prior to the Renaissance. For a long period the actors in such pieces consisted entirely of priests, and the performances were often given within the walls of churches. In process of time allegorical characters, such as Faith, Vice, Virtue, &c., were introduced, and even more secular parts than these were included, while the nature of the whole scheme was gradually overturned. Originally intended as a means of instruction, these exhibitions became more and more a source of entertainment, and as a natural consequence were turned adrift, so far as any intimate connection went, by the church. They found, however, a much more receptive soil among the populace, who, in Scotland at least, grew so fond of these open air performances that it took over forty years of preaching, statutes, fines, and heavier punishments, to cure them of the craze. It has been commonly supposed that the Scotch by nature are not fond of the Drama. This has been urged by nearly all writers on the subject; some have insisted that the evidence of the Reformation clearly proves this, inasmuch as the people at that period voluntarily rejected all popish practices and pastimes—plays in particular being held in horror. History proves how utterly erroneous it is to

arrive at any such conclusion. Warton remarks,* that "The Scotch appear to have had an early propensity to theatrical representations," and the following pages will endeavour to show, by rigidly quoting facts, that this opinion, although not in accordance with that of any other writer on the subject, is correct.

Of the nature of the "Mysteries," "Moralities," and "Miracle Plays," it is not necessary in this work to speak. The subject has already been thoroughly exhausted,† and it is immaterial to the present purpose that none of the writers who have treated of it confine their observations to Scotland. The exhibitions, like the church that introduced them, were common to all Christian countries. Locality might produce variations, greater or less, but the plan throughout was the same. Local peculiarities, as well as individual performances of some of these pieces, will be particularised in their proper places. What is more important in the mean time is to endeavour to trace to its source the secular element that gradually infused itself into all dramatic exhibitions. This is to be done by following the subject in two directions: firstly, in the development of a love for dramatic shows among the people; secondly, in the growth of theatrical representation under Court patronage. The former, as being of the nature of an elder brother, claims attention first.

"Guisards"‡ was the name by which the earliest professional players or tumblers, minstrels, or mountebanks, were known. It is a name that has descended to our own day in connection with a curious custom which, like the name, may be traced direct to the practices of the early members of the "Guisard" profession. To the age of the name there is no clue. In the laws ascribed to Macbeth, "players and idle vagrants" are coupled together in the slightly uncomplimentary strain which was common in Acts of Parliament even up to a very recent date. At the period under consideration there was cause, no doubt, for such classification. They, the "Players or Guisards, were to be treated like beasts of burden, and compelled to draw the plough or cart," unless they betook themselves to some "mechanical occupation."§ The Guisards seem to have led a wandering life, going from house to house, fantastically dressed, and acting, dancing, or juggling for what they could get, while their connection with the Abbot of Unreason and Robin Hood was probably intimate. It is very likely that their services were greatly in demand for the May-day festivities which

* History of English Poetry, p. 541.

† Hone's Ancient Mysteries, &c.

‡ Halliwell spells it "Guisers."

§ Boethii Scotorum Historia, p. 251.—*Ed. Paris, 1574.*

constituted by far the most popular form of entertainment prior to, and for some years after, the Reformation.

What the precise functions of the Abbot of Unreason were, is not clear, but that they very much resembled those of the Abbot of Misrule or Lord of Misrule in England, is tolerably certain. According to the opinion of Lord Hailes,* the Lord of Misrule "was probably a farcical character in the interludes of those days, who, under the garb of a dignified churchman, uttered and acted absurdities for the entertainment of a licentious rabble." It may be mentioned that this curiously named personage also held the office of President of the Christmas Gambols, and promoted mirth and jollity at holiday seasons† in the houses of the nobility.

The Scottish Abbot of Unreason, however, would appear to have had a more extensive sphere of action, and his power seems to have been very great. Regular fees were paid to keep up the institution, and apparently contributions were exacted from particular individuals in a very high-handed style. There can be no doubt that, in Scotland, Moralities or similar entertainments, along with the traditional May-day processions and dancings, were given on the Sundays of May under the auspices of this all powerful Abbot. One qualification required in the Abbot of Unreason has not been much noticed by previous writers, namely, that of being able to turn any passing event into ridicule. Irving, in his "History of Scottish Poetry," relates‡ a story of an Abbot of Unreason in Borthwick, who, in 1547, gave a severe ducking in a mill-dam to the bearer of a writ against Lord Borthwick; and afterwards, in the church, tore the said writ into small pieces, and, mixing these with wine in a glass, made the bearer drink off the contents. This anecdote, if true, and there is no reason to doubt it, shows the Abbot of Unreason to have been a popularly elected functionary, who had complete licence to execute sentence on certain occasions in accordance with the vulgar ideas of right and wrong. Irving, in the work quoted above, speaks§ of the difficulty of defining the nature of the Robin Hood or Abbot of Unreason's entertainment. This would lead the reader to suppose that the author considered that the performances were cut and dried affairs, gone through according to a previously concerted plan. Such a notion, however, is surely wrong, and

* Quoted from Irving's *Scottish Poetry*, p. 447.

† Percy's *Notes on the Northumberland Household Book*, quoted by Irving, p. 447.

‡ The Anecdote is also printed in Sir Walter Scott's *Notes to "The Abbot."*

§ P. 446.

although there does not remain to us any complete record of them—all the information we have being of the most fragmentary nature—there is no difficulty, after a complete perusal of all that bears upon the subject, in coming to the conclusion that the *sports* of Robin Hood were carried on according to the caprice of the all potent Abbot of Unreason. Some practices, however, were in constant requisition. The performance of moralities is noted above, and the method of giving these shows will presently be detailed. Another invariable custom was to invade the church, caring for the sacredness neither of altar nor shrine, and there celebrating mock ceremonies in ridicule of the mass, and even going the length of singing indecent parodies on the hymns of the church.*

In the year 1445, a morality called "The Halie Blude," was acted on the Windmill Hill, in Aberdeen, and, curiously, in the same year the Town Council of that city resolved they would pay no more fees to the Abbot of Bon-Accord—such being the local cognomen of the Abbot of Unreason.

There is no record as to the manner in which this morality was performed, but a pretty accurate notion may be gathered from accounts of similar performances elsewhere.† The stages consisted of carts or rude platforms set up at different parts of the town. The exhibitions were often of great length, but were not gone through by one set of performers. One set of actors acted one portion of the piece; when they had finished they removed with their stage to another part of the town and repeated the same portion, another party in the mean time taking up the first stance and continuing or completing the entertainment.

The check received by the Abbot of Bon-Accord, mentioned above, is the earliest of the kind on record. There is little doubt that the Town Council very soon after reconsidered their decision, although no evidence of this is to be found‡ till 1486, when the annual allowance was limited to ten merks.

In encouraging or even permitting the Abbot of Unreason to exercise his office, the Roman Catholic Church had all along been cherishing a

* The Notes to "The Abbot," as well as the text of the novel, contain very interesting matter on this point.

† Hone's *Ancient Mysteries* and Warton's *History of English Poetry*.

‡ Much valuable information regarding the early Drama in Scotland is no doubt contained in the Records of such towns as Aberdeen, Perth, &c., and an exhaustive research would well repay the trouble. The Author does not quote directly from the Aberdeen Records, and never searched them. He, however, made minute search of the Edinburgh Records, as well as the Royal Household Books, which are preserved in the Register House.

viper in its bosom, which, at the first warning of the Reformation, bit its former protector with every species of ridicule. Whether the Protestant leaders encouraged this or not is unknown. The advantage they reaped from it cannot, however, be doubted. The Catholics, when it was too late, saw how powerful an enemy they had encouraged, and even taught, but their attempts to suppress it were futile. The Protestants, far too wise in their generation to permit the licence of Robin Hood longer than was just necessary for their purpose, set themselves the same task, which, however, was not accomplished until a new generation had sprung up. Both in Scotland and England Robin Hood had secured too firm a footing in the popular mind to be easily stamped out. The famous Bishop Latimer on one occasion was unable to draw a congregation, because Robin Hood and the Abbot of Unreason were holding their sports.*

The beginning of the end of the Abbot of Unreason is to be found in a statute enacted in 1555, which reads as follows† :—

“ *Item*, It is statute and ordained, that in all times cumming, na maner of person be chosen *Robert Hude*, nor *Little John*, *Abbot of Unreason*, *Queenis of Maij*, nor utherwise nouthir in Burgh nor to Landwart, in onie time to-cum : and gif ony Provest, Baillies, Councel, and Communitie, chuse sik ane Personage as *Robin Hude*, *Little John*, *Abbot of Unreason*, or *Queenis of Maij* within Burgh the chusers of sik, sall tane their freedome for the space of five zeires and utherwise sall be punished at the Queenis grace will, and the acceptar of sik-like office, sall be banished foorth of the realme : and gif ony sik persons, sik as *Robin Hude*, *Little John*, *Abbot of Unreason*, *Queenis of Maij* beis chosen out-with Burgh, and uthers Landward townes, the chusers sall pay to our Soveraine Ladie ten poundes, and their persones put in waird, there to remain during the Queenis grace pleasure : and gif onie women or uthers about summer trees singand, makis perturbation to the Queenis Lieges in the passage throw Burrowes and uthers Landward townes : The women perturbatoures for skafrie of money, or utherwise, sall be taken, handled, and put upon the cuck-stules of Everie Burgh or Towne.”

Before following the decline of the Abbot of Unreason to its conclusion, it will be best to turn back and trace what connection the Burgh of Edinburgh had with the Drama from the earliest times.

By charter under his great seal in 1456, James II. made over to the Burgh of Edinburgh “the valley or low ground between the rock called Craigingalt and the road to Leith (now callit the grenesyde),” (August 13th.)‡

As expressed in the charter, this ground was given to the town “for

* His Sixth Sermon before King Edward VI.

† Volume of Scots Acts.

‡ Charters and other Documents relating to the City of Edinburgh, 1871.

tournaments, sports, and proper warlike deeds to be done and accomplished there for the pleasure of us and our successors." Although it was given "in fee and heritage for ever," yet so early as 1520, "Greynsyde" was again granted to the Carmelite Friars, and there they remained until the Reformation. In August 1487,*—four hundred years ago,—the town supported "commoun pyperis," who were "feyit for the honour of the town" by "all honest persounis of substance" giving them their meat for one day each.

The first mention, however, which is directly connected with the Drama occurs in 1554, when, under date June 15—

"The Provost Baillies and Counsall ordanis the Tresaurar, Robert Grahame to pay the werkmen, merchandis, carteris, paynteris, and vtheris, that furnishe the grayth to the convoy of the moris to the Abbay and of the play maid that samyn day the tent day of Junii instant the sowm of xxxvij li. xvij s. ij d. as the compt producit be Sir William Makdougall maister of werk thairupoun proportit, prouiding alwayis that the said Sir William deliuer to the dene of Gylde the landsenye and canves specifit in the said tikket to be kept to the behuif of the toun."

Twelve days after we find—

"The baillies (&c.) sittand in jugement ordanis the tresaurar Robert Grahame to content and pay to the maister of wark of the makar of the playing place the sowme of xxiiij li. for compleiting thereof."

The playing place, however, was not completed for that sum, and on July 20th (1554), R. Grahame was ordained "To pay the maister of werk the sowm of xliij li. xiiij s. iiij d. makand in the hale the sowm of ane hundreth merkis and that to complete the playfield now biggand in the Grenesid." xxxiiij li. was given to the "werkmen that completit the playfield" on August 18th, between which date and October 12th the play or plays must have been performed.

On the latter date (October 12th), by far the most interesting entry occurs. It is as follows :—

"The Provost [&c.] ordanis the tresaurar R. Grahame to content and pay Walter Bynnyng the sowme of v li. for the making of the play graith and paynting of the Landsenye and the playaris facis providand alwayis that the said Walter mak the play geir underwritten furth cumand to the town quhen thai haif ado thair with, quhilkis he has now ressavit viz.—viiij play hattis, ane kingis crowne, ane myter, ane fulis hude, ane septour, ane pair angell wyngis, twa angell hair, ane chaplet of tryumphe."

The "Landsenye" mentioned above, and the "Canves," in the first

* For this and several following entries see Extracts from the Records of the Burgh of Edinburgh, 1869.

entry for this year, are very curious items. That some species of scenery was employed is certain; but what it was, as well as its extent, must ever be matter of conjecture. The painting of the face is a most interesting addition to our general knowledge of stage practices in those early days.

There is an entry in the Town Treasurer's accounts of the payment of £4, 18s. 2d. (Scots) for "the dennar maid to the playars." Unfortunately no date, further than that of the year, is given.* There being only one "dennar," it need not necessarily follow there was but one play, although as a matter of fact, only one can clearly be proved to have been played. It was Sir David Lindsay's "Three Estates."† Henry Charteris, the bookseller, mentions that‡ he sat nine hours while it was "playit at Grenesyde before the Quene Regent," adding that his seat was on the bank. That Mary of Guise was better provided for is shown by the following extract from the Treasurer's accounts;—

"*Item*, Payit for the making of the Quenis grace hous on the playfeild besyde the convoy hous under the samyn, and the playars hous, the jebbettis and skaffauld about the samyn, and burds on the playfeild, careing of thame fra the toun to the feild, and thair fra agane, the cutting and inlaik of greit and small tymmer, with the nallis and warkmenschip of vj wrychts twa dayis thairto, pynors' feis, cart hyre and uther necessars, as Sir William M'Dougall maister of wark, tikket beiris xvj li. v s. iiij d."

If we turn again to the Council Records, under date December 28, 1554, we find this curious entry:—"The prouest [&c.] findis it necessar and expedient that the litill farsche and play maid be William Lauder be playit afoir the Quenis Grace, and that scho be propinit to her nether gif with sum cowpis of silver." This can scarcely have been played in the Greenside, considering the time of year. In connection with the mention of William Lauder, it is interesting to note that a James Lauder was prebender of the "queir" of St Giles in 1553.

The success of the 1554 play can scarcely be doubted, and marks beyond dispute an important era in the development of the popular taste for the Drama. Robin Hood and his merry followers were suppressed in the following year,§ but the acting of plays seems to have continued in fashion. Yet it is curious to note that in England, at this very period, secular plays were strictly prohibited,|| as frequently containing "naughty

* 1554.

† Already played on two previous occasions in Scotland. See under The Drama under Court patronage, p. 17.

‡ See Preface to Charteris' Edition of Sir David Lindsay's Works. *Edinburgh*, 1582.

§ *Ante*, p. 7.

|| Notices illustrative of the Drama, Kelly, p. 19.

and seditious matters . . . to the slander of Christ's true and catholic religion."* Both countries were Roman Catholic at the time, and the government of Queen Mary easily perceived that plays—such as the "Three Estates," although, from a literary point of view, England possessed none such—were the most dangerous enemies of the Roman faith. On the other hand, it is more than probable that the Town Council of Edinburgh, who from the first leaned towards the reformed doctrines, purposely had the "Three Estates" performed on this occasion to serve their party's cause; while moralities and mystery plays were thrown in as excuses, these indecent exhibitions being far from obsolete at this date. In England, during Mary's reign, they were encouraged; and although, with the accession of Elizabeth they were enormously curtailed of their splendour and altogether of their official character, they still continued to be played until James I.'s reign. In Scotland they seem to have retained a measure of popularity much longer. In Kirkpatrick Sharpe's note to Kirkton's History of the Church of Scotland, the following passage is quoted from a sermon, preached in the Old Church of Edinburgh, December 29th, 1661, by Mr William Thomson:—

"We will tell you yet of a greater abomination than this, though little minded or laid to heart by many, and that is turning over this Holy Bible to stage plays. Is not this horrid blasphemy? Yet this is not done in a corner only, they openly avow the same: for will ye but stand at the close heads, they proclaim their wickedness when they call on passengers, saying, 'walk in, gentlemen, and ye shall see a new piece of work; ye shall there see Adam and Eve, Cain and Abel, walking in a lively manner, to see how they were created naked, and then deceived by the Serpent.'"

Of course, it is possible that ministers, in those days, were given to exaggerate on certain points, especially when they got on one of their favourite subjects. For all that, some truth must underlie the statement, which is most precise, regarding the nature of the play. It is really a most curious fact, as plays on sacred subjects were not congenial entertainment for the majority of Scotsmen at that time, although those on secular subjects were not looked on so unfavourably; even the Abbot of Unreason and Robin Hood, as already pointed out, requiring many years of suppression before they succumbed. As will be shown, the church during that time did not proceed with the amount of intolerance generally ascribed to it.

After the December "Farsche and Play" (1554), the town does not

* Collier's Annals, vol. i. p. 159.

seem to have dabbled in play-acting for a little while, but entries of payments to trumpeters, players on the “Organis,”* also on the “swas” and “quhyssill” are frequent. So soon, however, as 1558, we have the record† of another extensive exhibition :—

“The presidenttis ballies and Counsale ordanis James Adamsoun tresaurer to delyuer to William Adamsoun for his travell takin in the play maid at the tryumphe of our Souerane Ladyis Mariage the Sowm of foure lib. . . . to Walter Bynning, painter, for his panting and all his lawbouris takin be him in the tryumphe maid at our Souerane Ladyis Mariage the sowm of xxv merkis ; to William Lauder the sowm of aucht lib. by the fourtie schillings quhilkis he hes ellis ressaut for his travell and lawbour tane vpon him in setting furth of the play maid at our Souerane Ladyis Mariage. . . . to all the wrychtis quhilkis wrocht the play grayth in the play maid at the tryumphe of our Souerane Ladyis Mariage for their tymmer and workmanschip the sowm of fyve *lib.* four *s.* nyne *d.* . . . to Patrick Dorane for his travell taken on him for making of certaine claythis agane the tryumphe of our Souerane Ladyis the sowme of four *lib.* . . . to Adam Smyth, takkisman of Andro Mowbrayis yarde the sowm of vj *s.* viij *d.* for the dampnage and skayth sustenit be him in tramping down of his gers of the said yard be the convoy and remanent players the tyme of the tryumphe.”

In May 1561, Robin Hood again made his appearance in Edinburgh, in spite of the then recent Act of Parliament. The proceedings, which resulted in a serious tumult, are graphically related by John Knox‡ as follows :—

“The Papists and the bischopes disapointed of thair principall, purpois and interprys, did yet mak broyllle for trouble : for the rascall multitude were steired up to mak a Robin Huid, quhilk inormity was of mony yeirs left and damned by statute and Act of Parliament ; yet wald they not be forbiden, bot wald disobey and truble the toun especially upoun the nicht : quhareat the bailyeis offendet, tuk from thame some swords and ane enseyne, quhilk was occasioun that they the same nicht made a mutiny, kepit the ports of the toun, and intendit to have persewit sum men within thair own houses bot that upoun restitutioun of thair swords was stayet. Bot yet they ceassit not to molest, alswell the inhabitants of Edinburgh, as divers cuntreymen, taking from thame money, and threatening sum with farder injuries : quharewith the magistrates of the toun hiely offendet, tuk more diligent heid to sick as resorted to the toun, and apprehendet ane of the principall of that misordour called Kyllone, a cordinar, quhom they put to ane assyis ; and being convicted (for he culd not be absolved, for he was the chief man that spoylled John Moubry of ten crowns of the sone) they thoct to have executed jugement upoun him, and erectet a gibbet benethe the croce. Bot (quhider it came be paction with the provest and sum uther, or by instigatioun of the craftsmen, quho ever have bene bent over mekle to mantean sick vanity and ryotousnes, we fully know not) sud-danely thair did rys a tumult, the Tolbuthe was brokin up and not only the said Kyllone was violently taiken furthe, bot also all uther malefactours war set at freedome the gibbet was pullet down, and despytfully broken.”

From a note in the Town Treasurer's accounts, May 9th (1561)

* In St. Giles.

† Town Treasurer's accounts.

‡ History of the Reformation, p. 269.

appears to have been about the day of the disturbance, for under that date we read, "The apprentices on Sunday marched thro' the town with banners, &c., contrary to order and held the gates and had Robin Hood."

In August of the same year, Queen Mary made her public entry into her capital. "Patrik Schang, wrycht, and Walter Bynning" were directed* "to get tymmer canves &c. for the triumphis and fairssis at the Queen's Coming." There does not seem, however, to have been any regular dramatic performance, and the "triumphis and farceis" took place at the Tron.† Four thousand merks wers spent‡ upon this occasion, but chiefly upon costly robes, eating and drinking, and a presentation to the Queen.

April 30, 1562. The Queen gave a written charge to the magistrates to make proclamation in her name that :—

"Na Robene Hudis nor Lital Jhoneis suld be chosin within oure realme, nochttheless as we ar informeit ye intend to elect and chus personis to beir sic offices this maii approcheand, incontrair thi tennour of oure said Act quha under colour of Robene Hudis play purpoissis to rais seditione and tumult within our said burgh. . . . Nor that ony uther unleissum gammis be useit within oure said burgh quhilk may disquiet the communitie."

Among the stirring events which followed this last date, we find no record of dramatic concerns until the year 1574 is reached, when in the "Book of Universal Kirk," under March for that year, we read as follows :—§

"It is thought meit and concludit, that na clerk-playes, comedies or tragedies, be maid of the canonical scriptures, new as auld, on Sabboth-day nor wark-day, in time coming. The Contraveners hereof, if they be ministers, to be secludit fra the function; and if they be utheris, to be punished be the discipline of the Kirk, and Ordaines an Article to be given into sich as sits upon the police, that for uther plays, comedies, tragedies, and utheris profaine plays, as are not maid upon authentic pairtes of the Scriptures, may be considered before they be proponit publickly; and that they be not played upon the Sabboth Dayes."

Two years after (in 1576), the Assembly refused permission to the bailie of Dunfermline to represent on Sunday afternoon a certain play which was not founded on the canonical parts of the Scriptures;|| and in the following year, 1577, the General Assembly proposed to the Regent, "that his grace would discharge the plays of Robin Huid, King of May and sick utheris on the Sabboth day." This clearly points to the continued observance of these entertainments at the time.

On May 1st, 1579, proclamation was made "throu this burgh [Edinburgh] be sound of tabouryne that na inhabitant presume to accompany

* August 28th. † Town Council Records, August 28th.

‡ Town Council Records and Treasurer's Accounts.

§ Quoted from Sir David Dalrymple's "Historical Memorials," 1769, p. 41.

|| Book of Universal Kirk, per "Historical Memorials."

any sic as ar of mynde to renew the playes of Robine Hude or persute of ony catt hoillis."

The lieges would seem not to have paid strict attention to this, for in the course of the same year the following conundrum was propounded by one of the Synods:—* "Quhat ought to be done to sick persones that after admonition, will pass to may-playes; and specially elders and deacones, and utheris quha beares offices within the Kirk?"

The answer from the Assembly is appended, namely, that "They aucht not to be admittit to the sacraments without satisfaction; in special, elders and deacons."

Such notices, few though they be, decidedly point to dramatic exhibitions being a favourite form of recreation with the first generation of reformed Scotsmen. Considering the generally gross character of all entertainments in those days, the attitude of the kirk cannot be censured as unduly severe. It must be borne in mind that then, and for a long time after, the church, besides its duties of a religious nature, exercised all the functions that are now peculiar to newspapers. The majority of the people could not read, books were scarce, and no means of circulating news existed save through the kirk. It was the kirk which regulated thought and action in those days, as newspapers do now. The king himself was not free from attacks, and the moral authority of the Pope had been overturned only to be taken up and, after refitting, exercised by Messrs Knox & Co.

On the 29th October 1579, three pounds (Scots) was paid, half to the violers and half to the "Sangsters" who performed at the king's entry, and the following record is sufficiently interesting to warrant insertion—November 27th 1579:—

"Androw Buquhan be placit as maister of the sang scole as alsua for uptaking of the psalmes in the Kirk of this burgh. Twenty merkis together with twenty merkis yeirle for payment of the Sangscole mail—as alsua that he sal be astricted to tak na mair for the instruction and learning of the tounis bairns in the Airt of Musik nor quarterlie half ane merk and the dochtour twa schillingis quarterlie."

Although the Drama was discouraged, it is pleasant to learn that music, at any rate, was not.

So late as 1588, Greenside would seem to have still been used for plays, for on November 1st, John Hill, who was tenant of that land, "wes discharget of ony teilling and ryving of ony pairt of the playfeyld."

* Book of Universal Kirk.

CHAPTER II.

THE DRAMA IN SCOTLAND UNDER COURT PATRONAGE.



IN the previous chapter are traced the outlines of the early development of the Drama among the Scottish people. It is now necessary to go back and seek out the beginnings of its existence under Court Patronage; under which auspices it continued to flourish long after its first patrons, the people, had thrown it over.

James II. was a great patron of chivalry, and Scotland, in his day, was famed for its jousts and feats of arms. But Royalty, in other ways than tournaments, had even before his era shown its fondness for better things than mimic bloodshed. Royal patronage of Literature, the Drama (or such rudiments of it as then existed), and the Fine Arts can easily be established. The Stuarts, first and last, were all intelligent and munificent patrons of the Drama. According to the historian Drummond,* who apparently takes his information from Buchanan,† James I. kept quite a number of “Historiones” in his pay, or at least in his service. These, Drummond observes, were greatly instrumental in making the Court, and by its example the country, “too soft and delicate, superfluous in all delights and pleasures; masques, banqueting, gorgeous apparel, revelling, were not only licensed, but studied and admired.”‡ The picture which Drummond here draws is characterised by Irving, in his “History of Scottish Poetry,” § as a piece of “idle declamation.” Perhaps Irving is right in this estimate, so far as the *country* was concerned; but on the other hand, it cannot be so certainly said that the Court was free from Drummond’s imputation. It is, however, an unsatisfactory process to follow the reasonings and

* History of Scotland, 1655, p. 17.
† Rerum Scotic. Hist., p. 191.

‡ Hist. of Scot., 1655.
§ P. 371, ed. 1861.

statements of the older historians, who, at best, spent years in obtaining information which any anxious student now-a-days, who takes the trouble to visit the Advocates' Library or Register House, may find in a few hours.

From the enormous number of invaluable documents which are kept within the latter repository, much curious information is to be had in relation to the patronage of the Drama by the Scottish kings. The first entry in point of date which is connected with the subject, is quoted from the "Exchequer Rolls." * It was made in 1364, and reads as follows :— "Et magistro Gilberto Armestrang, ad soluendum ystrionibus apud Inchemurthach x li." In 1399, again, we read, "Et aliis mimis ex consideracione auditorum xx s."

In these early times there are regular entries of allowances to the "Minstrels of the Chekkar," and an occasional payment to players—"histrionibus in scaccario." These individuals were employed for the purpose of enlivening the hours of labour of the keepers of the records, and the entries were probably made while some of the "Histriones," jugglers or tumblers, or whatever they really may have been, were exercising their profession.

In 1488, and again in the following year, there are entries of payments to one Patrick Johnson, "and his fallowis that playt a play to the king in Lithgow;" and in 1490, there would seem to have been a company of French comedians in Dundee, for we read,† "Item, on Fryda the xxiiij Julij in Dunde to the king to gif the Franschemen that playt xx unicornis xviiij li."

Although Drummond may have overdrawn the picture of luxury and vice that pervaded the nation in the reign of James I., the testimony which is ready to our hands in the writings of Dunbar the poet, regarding the state of morality in James IV.'s time, cannot be easily gainsaid.

Born about 1465, and educated for the church, of which he became a priest, Dunbar is chiefly remembered as being the author of the beautiful allegorical poem entitled the "*Thistle and the Rose*," written in honour of the marriage of James IV. to Margaret Tudor in 1503. Dunbar had every means of studying the life in and around the Court, and in his poems we get some remarkable glimpses into the state of society during the reign of James IV. A general depravity of manners had begun to pervade the nation; the women were strangers to modesty, the men to sober industry. A species of luxury had been introduced, which enervated

* Several volumes of these are published.

† Exchequer Rolls.

the mind without refining it, and nearly all relish for simple pleasures had been lost. As for the priestcraft,—steeped in every vice and species of low cunning,—it was no wonder it fell, as it did, when its own members were the first to advertise its rottenness. Connected with the marriage of James IV. to Margaret, daughter of Henry VII., in 1503, we have the first authentic record of a dramatic performance in Edinburgh. A long and minute account of the Princess's progress from Richmond to Holyrood was written by John Young, Somerset Herald, who accompanied the Princess.* The party arrived at Edinburgh on August 7th, and we are told by Young, that the Queen, then fourteen years old, was met by the King, clothed in cloth of gold, the Earl of Bothwell bearing the sword of state before him. After mounting behind the King, the Queen and her Royal Consort rode through the streets, by the way of Grey Friars and Grassmarket, amid great rejoicings. At the former place a halt was made, and the Friars, carrying relics, &c., met them. After the relics had been kissed, a dramatic scene of chivalry was presented, the subject being a knight-errant rescuing his distressed lady love from the hands of her ravisher. Thereafter they were stayed at an embattled barrier, erected for the occasion, at the windows of which appeared "Angells synging joyously for the comynge of so noble a ladye." At the Cross, where a fountain flowed with wine, a symbolical scene was gone through by several Greek goddesses, and then the Angel Gabriel saluted the new Queen. At the Netherbow, Justice was discovered treading Nero under foot, Force bearing a pillar, and so on. When the royal party got to the Abbey, adjacent to which James IV. had for four years been building a palace for Margaret's reception, *Te Deum* was sung, and the Queen kissed all the ladies of the Court, and "after she had kyssed them all, the King kyssed her for her labour!" The following day they were married, and John Young is as particular in his description of the magnificent costumes worn on the occasion, as ever was modern reporter at a fashionable marriage of the present day.† What, however, is more interesting for the present purpose, is to find that a company of English comedians, headed by one John English, accompanied the Princess all the way from England, and "after dynner" (on the 8th August), says John Young, "a moralite was played by the said John Englishe and his companyons in

* See Leland Coll., tom. iii.

† For a tolerably full and thoroughly readable account of the whole ceremony, see Wilson's *Memorials of Edinburgh*.

the prescence of the king and qwene, and then daunses war daunced." At this time John English was in the pay of Henry VII., as one of the "players of the king's interludes." The earliest information extant about him, is an entry of a half-yearly payment made to him, Edward Maye, Richard Gibson, and John Hammond, of three pounds six shillings and eightpence each, for their services in the above capacity. Although not the principal of the king's players, English would seem, by the fact of being selected to head the company sent to Scotland, to have been esteemed a performer of eminence. He continued in Court service long after Henry VIII. came to the Crown, and was eventually pensioned on half pay (£3, 6s. 8d. per annum), by that monarch.*

In the year 1515, when the Duke of Albany arrived from France in order to undertake the regency of the kingdom, "most facetious comedies and exquisite spectacles" were exhibited. What were the nature of these may easily be conjectured after reading the account of the similar proceedings in 1503. They mark, however, no important point in the history of the subject in hand.† Again, in 1538, upon the arrival of Mary of Guise at St Andrews, to wed James V., very extensive pageants were exhibited.

"The Queen," says Lindsay of Pitscottie,‡ "landed at the place called Fyfeness, near Balcomy, where she remained till horse came to her. But the King was in St Andrews, with many of his nobility, waiting upon her home-coming. Then he, seeing that she was landed in such a part, he rode forth himself to meet her, with the whole lords spiritual and temporal, with many barons, lairds, and gentlemen, who were convened for the time at St Andrews in their best array; and received the Queen with great honours and plays made to her. And first, she was received at the new Abbay-gate; upon the East side thereof there was made to her a triumphant arch, by Sir David Lindesay of the Mont, lyon herald, which caused a great cloud come out of the heavens above the gate, and open instantly; and there appeared a fair lady most like an angel, having the keys of Scotland in her hands, and delivered them to the Queen, in sign and token that all the hearts of Scotland were open to receive her grace; with certain orations and exhortations made by the said Sir David Lindesay to the Queen, instructing her to serve God, obey her husband, and keep her body clean, according to God's Will and Commandments."§

In the following year, namely, 1539-40, during the feast of Epiphany, was performed Sir David Lyndsay's "Plesant Satyre of the Three Estates,"

* See Collier's *Annals of the Stage*, vol. i., pp. 36, 43, 65, and 97.

† It may reasonably be objected that the accounts of this and the following pageant should have been given in the former chapter, as being really popular exhibitions got up to entertain royalty, and not the outcome of Court patronage. As they fit in better in this place, and are at best of little or no importance in the development of the Drama, they have been placed as above.

‡ Quoted from Irving's *History of Scottish Poetry*, p. 371.

§ Leland in his "Collectanea," ed. 1770, vol. iv., p. 258, records that "great triumphs, farces, and plays were made unto the Queen's grace at Edinburgh on this occasion."

at Linlithgow, before the king, queen, and the "hoole counsaile spirituall and temporall." In the same year Sir William Eure wrote to Lord Cromwell a full account both of the performance and the play.*

This was, probably, not the first performance of the piece. It appears to have been originally played at Cupar in 1535, although no particulars of the event are preserved. The "Satyre" is ostensibly "in commendatioun of Vertew and vituperatioun of Vice," but the satire of the piece, which, if peculiar, is plentiful, mostly falls upon the clergy of the day. This fact, taken in conjunction with the direct Court patronage extended to it, marks a curious stage in the progress of the Reformation in Scotland. Wilson, in his "Memorials of Old Edinburgh," says, "This play so effectually aided the work of the reformers, under whose care the stage was immediately placed, that it may be styled the first and last effort in dramatic genius in Scotland." His statement is correct in so far as it points out the importance of the "Three Estates" as a factor in forwarding the cause of the Reformation; but the stage was not "immediately placed under the care of the reformers." In the first place, there was no stage, in the sense conveyed, in existence, and secondly, the "reformers" had no control of the few dramatic episodes scattered through the history of the following hundred years. It is true, however, as already pointed out, that the Church (*i.e.* the Reformers) accepted the aid of the Drama, although it did not openly encourage exhibitions of any sort. But the production of the "Three Estates" is of importance from another point of view. It is not only the finest effort in dramatic composition in Scotland up to this period, but England produced no rival to it then or for many years after. "The contemporary history of English poetry presents us," says Irving,† "with no dramatic work equal to the Satyre of the Three Estaitis."

Unfortunately the first effort made in Scotland to produce a Drama was practically the last as well. Sir David Lyndsay did not again turn his attention to this form of composition, while the bigotry, selfishness, and hypocrisy fostered by the Reformation seem to have effectually stifled any thoughts on the subject that may have been entertained by others. All which, seeing the excellent start that had been made, must be greatly deplored.

It is natural to suppose that the clergy then in power did not relish

* Collier's *Annals of the Stage*, vol. i., p. 122.

† *History of Scottish Poetry*, p. 381.

the satire aimed at them. On the author of the "pleasant satyre," however, they could not wreak their vengeance. Not so fortunate was one Kyllor, a Dominican friar, whom they roasted on the Castle Hill of Edinburgh, on the last day of February of the very year under consideration. His offence had been the composing of a "Mystery" on the subject of Christ's Passion, in which he ventured to expose the odious nature of persecution and the immoral lives of the clergy, whose power at the time was as great as their profligacy. This piece had been acted on a Good Friday, at Stirling, in presence of the king. Not having rank or connections to protect him, Kyllor paid for exercising his poetical talents with his life.* James Wedderburn was also the author of two plays, in which the clergy came in for a full share of ridicule. These were acted in Dundee; but, owing perhaps to the representations being before an obscure audience, they did not bring him into trouble.† Not a fragment of the plays by either of these men is preserved, so that no estimate can be made of their literary consequence.

So late as March 1558-9, a council of the clergy was held in Blackfriars, Edinburgh, when an Act was made, "that Sir David Lyndsay's book should be abolished, and burned by the common executioner!"‡

On the 17th January 1568, it is recorded by one Birrel, who left behind him a most interesting and curious diary, that "a play made by Robert Semple" was enacted at Edinburgh before the Regent Moray and several of the Scottish nobility. That Moray gave his sanction and patronage to such exhibitions is distinctly interesting. What was the name of the play is unknown; although the general impression has been in favour of it having been "Philotus." It cannot be proved, however, that "Philotus" was written by Robert Semple; indeed, the bulk of opinion points in the contrary direction.§

On the occasion of the reception of James VI. at Edinburgh in 1579, very considerable preparations seem to have been made to do proper honour to the young sovereign. One or two entries in the Town Council records are worth giving in full:—

* Irving's History of Scottish Poetry, p. 444. Knox's History of the Reformation, p. 22. Spottiswood's History of the Church of Scotland, p. 66.

† Irving's History of Scottish Poetry, p. 445; he takes his information from MS. History of the Church of Scotland, by Calderwood.

‡ Campbell's Journey, vol. ii., p. 161. Pittscottie's History, p. 315, 3rd ed.

§ See Preface to Bannatyne Club reprint, by J. W. Mackenzie.

"Sept. 14.—Ordanis Robert Henrison, chirurgion, and Robert Kar baillie, to speik the Frenchman, using William Stewart for his opinion in devyse of the triumphe agane the kingis heir cuming."

"Oct. 14.—The Baillies, &c., ordanis proclamatiounis to be maid be sound of tabourin throu this burgh, commanding all the inhabitants thereof to hing their stairis with tapestrie and ares warkis on Fryday nixt." . . .

But the most important is under date September 4th :—

"The samyn day ordanis Mr James Lowson, minister, William Littill, and John Johnston, to pas to the Hie scule of this burgh, and vesie the maister of the Hie scolis tragedies, to be maid be the bairnis agane the kingis heir cuming, and to repoirt."

Whether such exhibitions were commonly given by the High School boys, is not on record. It would be decidedly interesting to find that they had been.

In the course of the king's progress through the town, nothing of the nature of a play, or even morality, was presented. When opposite to the "hous of Justice, thair shew thaymeselfis unto him, four gallant verteous ladeyis, to wit, Peace, Justice, Plentie, and Policie, and aither of thayme had an oraison to his Majesty."* Otherwise such representations as of King Solomon with the two mothers who disputed about the babe, and Bacchus distributing wine to all and sundry, constituted the pageant.

Upon the arrival of James VI. and his queen in 1590, great preparations and feasting were indulged in, but there is no notice of anything at all relating to the subject on hand.

Three years afterwards, namely, in February 1593,† a most interesting event took place. It was none other than the visit of a Company of English Comedians to Holyrood. Who they were, what they acted, as well as all other particulars that would be of interest now, are not to be had. All that can be said with certainty is, that they played here and were rewarded by the king for their pains. In the volumes of the Treasurer's accounts, preserved in the Register House, Edinburgh, is the following entry under above date :—

"Item. payit be co'mand of his maties precept to certane Inglis c'medianis the comp'oun of the escheit of ye laird of Kilcrewch and his complices as ye said precept pduceit [producit] upoun compt beiris. iiij^c xxxiiij li. vi s. viij d.

That this was the first English company of comedians who visited

* See Maitland's History of Edinburgh, p. 37.

† Old style, really 1593-4 or 1594.

James VI. is by no means likely. The next record of a company being in Edinburgh is in 1599; it does not follow, however, that no actors came to Edinburgh during the interval between 1594 and that year. Nothing positive is known; although a curious sidelight is thrown upon the subject by a document in the State Paper Office, dated March 22, 1595. It is a letter from George Nicolson (English political agent at the Scots Court) to Mr Bowes. The substance of the portion which relates to the players is as follows:—"The king heard that Fletcher, the player, was hanged, and told him and Roger Aston so, in merry words, not believing it, saying very pleasantly that if it were true he would hang them also."* Evidently, by this, James VI. was acquainted with Fletcher previous to 1595. On April 15th, 1598, Nicolson writes to Lord Burleigh—"It is regretted that the Comedians of London should scorn the king and the people of this land in their play; and it is wished that the matter be speedily amended, lest the king and the country be stirred to anger."†

Regarding the company of 1599, considerably more information is to hand than about that of 1594. In the first place, we know whose company it was—a very important item indeed. George Nicolson, writing to Sir Robert Cecil, on November 12, speaks of the performance of the English players, Fletcher, Martin, and their company; thus leaving no doubt on this point. It would seem that Fletcher and his company, having entertained the Court for a while (probably in the tennis court at Holyrood), obtained from the king a warrant to act in public, with a precept to the bailies to provide them with a house for the purpose. Blackfriars' Wynd was the locality chosen, and trumpets and drums were sent through the town by the players to advertise their entertainment. This was more than the clergy could stand, and the four sessions directed that no one was to visit the playhouse, or if they did, it would be under the kirk's severest displeasure. Upon this some of the ministers were called before the king and his council, when in defence of their action they alleged Acts of Parliament against stage plays, the danger of Sabbath profanation, &c. One of their number gave this other argument: "We heard that the Comedians in their plays checked your royall person with secreit and indirect taunts and checkes; and there is not a man of honour in England would give suche fellowes so muche as their countenance." This last argument was

* Calendar of State Papers relating to Scotland, vol. ii. p. 676.

† *Ibid.*, vol. ii. p. 749.

ingenious, but it did not serve. The four sessions had to publish an "Act" annulling their former proclamation, and the players were allowed to follow their vocation.*

The first document that sheds any light on this matter is contained in the Treasurer's accounts :—

"October 1599. *Item*, delyverit to his hienes selff to be gevin to ye Inglis c'medianis xiiij crownes of ye Sone—at iij li. vj s. viij d. ye pece in inde xliij li. vj s. viij d."

"November 1599. *Item*, be his mat^{ties} directioun geven to Sir George Elphingstoun to be delyverit to ye Inglis c'omedians to by tymber for ye preparatioun of ane hous to thair pastyme as the said Sir George ticket beris xl li."

The latter of these entries refers to the house in Blackfriars' Wynd, and shows that the magistrates were not expected to be at any expense in fitting up the players. On the other hand, James VI. makes their expenses, in this matter, his own. It was some time after this that the four sessions forbade the people to resort to the plays, and we have the king's reply as follows :—

"The Kingis Majestie and Lordis of his secreit counsall considering the lait contempt and indignitie done to his Hienes be the foure Sessionis of the burgh of Edinburgh, in taking upoun thame be ane publict act to contramand the warrand and libertie grantit be his Hienes to certane Commedianis to play within the said burgh, and in ordaning thair ministeris publictlie to discharge thair flokis to repair to the saidis commedies, thay haveing nawayis acquentit his Majestie of befoir with ony lawfull caus or ground moving thame thairunto, nor na utherwayis acknowlegeing his Hienes, as they aucht and sould have done afoir thay had sa avowedlie opponit thameselffis to his Majesteis warrand and directioun fairsaid,—Thairfoir his Majestie and the saidis Lordis ordanis ane officiar of armes to pas to the Mercat Croce of Edinburgh and thair be oppin proclamatioun in his Hienes name and autoritie, to command and charge the haill personis of the saidis foure sessionis becaus thay ar ane multitude, to convene thameselffis in thair accustomat place of convening within thrie houris nixt efter the said charge, and thair be ane speciall act to cas, annull, and discharge the uther act fairsaid, and with that to gif ane speciall ordinance and directioun to thair haill ministeris that thay, efter thair sermonis upoun the nixt Sondag, publischie admonische thair awne flockis to reverence and obay his Majestie, and to declair to thame that they will not restreane nor censure ony of thair flokis that sall repair to the saidis commedeis and playis, considering his Majestie is not of purpois or intentioun to authorize, allow, or command onything quhilk is prophane or may cary ony offence or sclander with it; and to charge thame heirto, under the pane of rebelloun and putting of thame to the horne; and to charge the saidis ministeris that thay, efter thair saidis sermonis, conforme thameselffis to the directioun and ordinance to be sett down be the saidis Sessionis heiranent under the said pane of rebelloun, and gif, ony of the saidis personis dissobayis to denounce the saidis dissobeyaris rebellis. †

"(November 8, 1599, at Holyrood.)"

* Calderwood, vol. v., 765-767, &c.

† The Register of the Privy Council of Scotland, vol. vi., p. 39. 1884.

The clergy replied, in a somewhat humbled strain, as follows :—

“ Forsamekle as, the Kingis Majestie haveing grantit ane warrand and libertie to certane Ingliche Commedianis to play within the burgh of Edinburgh, yit, upoun some sinister and wrangous reporte maid to the foure Sessionis of the Kirk of Edinburgh be certane malicious and restles bodyis quha, upoun everie licht occasioun misconstrowes his Majesteis hail doingis and misinterpreitis his Hienes gude intentionis quhatsumevir the saidis foure Sessionis wer moved verie raschely and unadvisitlie to contramand be ane publict act his Majesteis said warrand, and thair withall ordanit thair ministeris to publische the said contramand, and to threathine the censuris of the kirk aganis the contravenaris thair of, unacquenting his Majestie of befoir with ony lawfull ground or caus moveing thame thairto ; with the quhilk thair errour and oversicht thay being now better advisit and haveing all convenit on this mater, and willing nawise to be contentious with his Majestie, bot in all reverence and humilitie to obay his Hienes as becumis gude and obedient subjectis, in respect of the pruif quhilk thay have evir had of his Majestie, that his Hienes hes not commandit nor allowit ony thing careying with it ony offence or slander, thay, efter the dew acknowlegeing of their formar errour, rasche and unadvised proceidingis, have now by ane uther act cassit, annullit and dischargit thair formar act forsaid, and hes ordanit the same to be ineffectuall heirefter, with the admonitionis gevin conforme thairto be the ministeris to thair floikis in maner forsaid, sua that now not onely may the saidis Commedianis friely injoy the benefite of his Majesteis libertie and warrand grantit to thame ; bot all his Majesteis subjectis, inhabitants within this said burgh and utheris quhat sumevir, may friely at thair awne plesour repair to the saidis commedeis and playis without ony pane, skaith, censuring, reproche or slander to be incurrit be thame thairthrow, or to be uncensureit or fund fault with be the ministeris magistratis, or sessions of the said burgh in onywise, nochtwithstanding the first act forsaid and admonitionis to be maid and gevin heirefter without his Majesteis consent and allowance. And ordanis officiaris of armes to pass to the Mercat Croce of Edinburgh and thair be oppin proclamatioun mak publicatioun heir of, quhairthrou nane pretend ignorance of the same.*

“(November 10th, 1599.)”

From the Treasurer's accounts† we get the following additional information :—

November 1599. “ *Item*, to w@ forsy^t messenger passund w^t l'res [letres] to the Mercat Croce of Ed^r chairging ye elderis and deacouns of the hail four sessionis of Ed^r to @null thair act maid for ye discharge of certane Inglis Comedianis, x s. viij d.”

“ *Item*, to the said William passand w^t utheris l'res [letres] to the said Mercat Croce and thair efter sound of trumpet notyfeing his ma^{ties} ples'r [pleasure] to all his liegis that ye saidis c'omedians my^t use thair playis in Ed^r, xxi s. iiij d.”

In December the king thought the comedians were entitled to further reward, perhaps in consideration of the ill usage they had received from the kirk. - Accordingly we find the following in the Treasurer's accounts :—

* The Register of the Privy Council of Scotland, vol. vi., p. 41.

† Not published.

“*Item*, lykwayis delyverit be his Hienes directioun to Sir George Elphingstoun of Blythiswod Knyt to be distributit among certane Inglis C’omedianis as his Maties warrand thairupone testifeis, iij^c xxxiij li. vi s. viij d.”

Fletcher again headed the company of players on their next (and last) visit, and there is a possibility, almost amounting to a probability, that Shakspeare was among them. Fleay, in his “Life of Shakspeare,”* speaking of the disgrace that the Chamberlain’s company of players incurred by producing Richard II., and the resultant provincial tours of Shakspeare, Burbadge, and company (1601), says, “The travels were not confined to England. In October they had reached Aberdeen, where they received the title of the ‘King’s Servants,’ and Laurence Fletcher, their manager, was admitted burghess of guild of the borough. In all probability a version of the old *Macbeth* play was produced before King James; such a version as that of Hamlet, acted at the Universities. . . . Anything more pleasing to the king and people of Scotland could not have been selected.”†

The only note of this company in the Treasurer’s accounts is under date 1601, and reads as follows:—

“*Item*, payit be precept to Roger Aschetoun to be gevin to certane Inglis Comedianes as ye samyn w^t his Acquittance producet upone compt proportis, iij c. li.”

There are also entries during the same year of payments to John Kinloch for expenses of “certain strangers of his company,” and for bedding, &c. for the same in the Canongate, all of which *may* refer to the comedians.

It is quite likely that these comedians came by special invitation of the king. After staying in Edinburgh for a considerable time, James ordered them to repair to Aberdeen to amuse the citizens with the exhibition of their “plays, comedies, and stage plays.” They were recommended by his special letter addressed to the magistrates, by whom they were presented with thirty-two merks for their services, besides being entertained to supper on one of the nights of their playing. At the same time the freedom of the town was conferred upon Lawrence Fletcher *and each of his company*.‡

Shakspeare, therefore, was probably a citizen of Aberdeen, for no evidence has been brought forward to show that he was not with his

* 1886.

† P. 34.

‡ Kennedy’s Annals of Aberdeen.

company at this time. The greatest authority on Shaksperian matters living, namely, Mr J. O. Halliwell Phillipps, has not yet investigated the matter.* When he, or some one else who is qualified, and who has time and money at command, does so, important results may reasonably be expected.

At Edinburgh, in the year 1603, was published, “ane verie excellent and delectabill Treatise intitult Philotus. Quhairin we may persave the greit inconveniences that fallis out in the mariage betwene age and zouth. Imprinted at Edinburgh be Robert Charteris 1603. Cum privilegio Regali.”

Philotus is a comedy in rhyming stanzas, and seems of a more modern date than the reign of James V. There is very little probability of its being the composition of Semple, to whom it has often been ascribed. That it was not written during Queen Mary's reign appears evident from the following passage :—

“ Last, Sirs, now let us pray with one accord
For to preserve the persoun of our King,
Accounting ay this gift as of the Lord
Ane prudent prince above us for to ring.”

This comedy, in its plan and execution, discovers a much nearer approach to the modern drama than Lyndsay's “Three Estates.” The versification is easy, the characters are well drawn, and the plot is really interesting ; it has, however, the great drawback of being terribly indecent, and the speeches, at times, are too long and declamatory.

It is worth noting that William Alexander, Earl of Stirling (born 1580), wrote several dramatic pieces which were published at Edinburgh. His first, *Darius*, was originally written in a mixture of Scottish and English dialects ; but the author afterwards not only polished the language, but even very considerably altered the play itself. The first Edinburgh edition was published in 1603, and in London in 1604 and 1637. Alexander also wrote *Cræsus* (1604), *The Alexandrean Tragedy* (largely copied from Virgil, Seneca, &c., 1605), and *Julius Caesar* (1604 and 1607).

A few days after James' arrival in London (1603), there was granted by him to Lawrence Fletcher, William Shakspeare, and others, the first dramatic licence in England. But, with the removal of the Court from Holyrood to Whitehall, the Drama in Scotland came to an end. Even

* In a letter to the Author he says, he hopes to do something to the subject during the winter 1887-8.

on such occasions as King James' visit in 1617, and King Charles' coronation at Holyrood in 1633, there seem to have been no dramatic entertainments. Pageantry and exhibitions and music there were, but not a trace of a genuine play. Not till we arrive at the year 1663 is there any further record of the Drama. In that year, however, was published "Marciano ; or, The Discovery. A Tragi-Comedy, acted with great applause, before His Majesty's High Commissioner, and others of the Nobility, at the Abby of Holyrudhouse, on St John's night. By a Company of Gentlemen."

The Commissioner that year was the Earl, afterwards Duke, of Rothes. The play is believed to have been written by William Clark, a member of the Scottish Bar.* In the preface to the play he says :—

"It was easie to cast the horoscope of this peece before it peep'd into the world, it being to appear in a Country, where the cold air of men's affections nips such buds in their very infancy. . . . Although then, it is not ordinar to apologize for Playes in general, at the publishing of any particular one ; yet, because this now appears as a City-swaggerer in a Country-church, where seldom such have been extant ; and that the peevish prejudice of some persons, who know nothing beyond the principles of base, greazy, arrogant, illiterate Pedants, who, like the grasshoppers of Egypt, swarm in every corner of this Nation, and plague all the youth accordingly, is such, that they cannot have patience to hear of a comedy, because they never see one acted."

In the same year (1663), liberty was granted to one "Jon Ponthus, professor of physick," to build a stage "doun about Blackfreir Wynd head, for publick view, they acting no obscene thing to give offence."†

Five years later (1668), a representation of Sydsersf's Comedy of "Tarugo's Wiles, or the Coffee House," took place in the Tennis Court at Holyrood Abbey, without the Watergate. (It was burnt down in 1774.)‡

Thomas Sydsersf, it would seem, continued for some time thereafter to retain a dramatic company ; but whether he was allowed the use of the Tennis Court is uncertain. He was the son of Sydsersf, Bishop of Galloway ; had served under the Marquis of Montrose, and in 1661 published the *Caledonian Mercury*, the first original Scottish newspaper.§ He remained in Edinburgh till 1689.

In 1669 the "Counsell" granted warrant to Robert Clerk and Stephen Grege, "inglishmen to act thes motions or plays within the citie

* Logan's Reprint.

† Records of Edinburgh, vol. x., p. 192 ; and *Nugæ Scoticæ*.

‡ Logan's Edition of Marciano, preface, p. v.

§ Inglis' Dramatic Writers of Scotland.

or suburbs, called *pollishingello*, or the *beateing of the sea*, or such uther rather motions grin they ar expert, or can exercise ; and that till the first day of August next to come.”*

In the following year (1670), the “Councill” gave James Underwood permission to exercise the “motion or play called the *Judgment of Soloman* and other playes.”

The Drama was unquestionably gaining a footing, not only in Edinburgh, but in other parts of Scotland. This is well shown by the following excerpts from the note-book of Sir John Foulis, Bart. of Ravelstoun :—

“1671, Dec. 1. A Dinner at Leith to Sir James, Lady Grissell, Cristian, Antie, &c., and for the play, £11, 4/ [Scots].”

“1672, Jany. 26. When we went over to Burntiland, for coatches, fraught, dinner, and the play, £20, 5/.”

“1672, Feby. 27. Spent at Newhaven and Leith, and at the play, £6.”

“1672, March 9. Payed for myselfe, my wife, and Cristian, to see Macbeth acted, and for sweetmeats for Lady Colingtoune, Lady Margaret M’Kenzie, and others, £6, 2/.”

This is the first record of any of Shakspeare’s plays being acted in Edinburgh.

“1672, June 21. To see the Comedie when the Commissioner [John Duke of Lauderdale] was there, and for oranges for gentlewomen, £2, 8/.”

“1672, Dec. 21. To see Sir Soloman acted, £1, 9/.”

Another curious evidence of actors being well known in Scotland at this time is afforded by the statute book ; for by statute 10, July 26th, “Concerning Apparel,” which endeavours to lay down rules for people not dressing beyond their station, players are exempted in the following clause :—“Excepting always from the present Act, Comedians, as to the cloaths which they make use of upon the stage.”†

It appears also from the records of Edinburgh ‡ that in 1673, Edward and James Fountanes, masters of the revels, produced, before the Town Council, letters from His Majesty’s Privy Council, empowering them to set up stages in any part of the city, and to punish persons acting without their authority. The Town Council considered this as “verrey hurtfull and prejudiciall to the priviledges of the good toun ;” so they appointed three of their number to speak to the Lord Chancellor about the matter. The Lord Chancellor told the deputation he could do nothing,

* Records of Edinburgh, p. 71 ; and *Nugæ Scoticæ*.

† Scots Acts.

‡ Vol. xxvii., p. 149.

and recommended them to go to the Privy Council, which august body promised the Town Council their assistance. Four years after (1677, Nov. 23) the Town Council gave permission to John Mash, rope dancer, to erect a stage within the tennis court, *opposite the Tron*, "af the hie street," and to put up volting ropes within the "said court for acting his playes and showes for which he has heirby libertie to take from eache persone that shall desyre to see the saids playes, thrie shilling Scots money and no more."

Probably Sydsersf's or some company of Comedians was acting in Edinburgh, when, in the latter part of 1679, the Duke of York came to reside in Scotland. Whether such was the case or not, the future king brought with him a company selected from both the London houses.*

Dryden alludes to this in one of his prologues:—

"Discords and plots, which have undone our age,
With the same ruin have o'erwhelm'd the stage.
Our house has suffer'd in the common woe,
We have been troubled with Scotch rebels too.
Our brethren are from Thames to Tweed departed,
And of our Sisters, all the kinder-hearted,
To Edinburgh gone or coach'd or carted.
With bonny bluecap there they act all night
For Scotch half-crown, in English three-pence hight.
One nymph, to whom fat Sir John Falstaff's lean,
There with her single person fills the scene.
Another, with long use and age decay'd,
Div'd here old woman, and rose there a maid.
Our trusty door-keepers of former time
There strut and swagger in heroic rhyme."

The only record of the performances given by these brilliant artistes at Holyrood is preserved by Lord Fountainhall:—

"May 29, 1681, having fallen on a Sunday, the Magistrates of Edinburgh kept the solemnity on Monday the 30th, and the Duke of York honoured them with his presence in the Theatre."

In addition, his Lordship mentions that—

"Novembris 15, 1681, being the Quean of Brittain's birth-day, it was kept by our Court at Halyruid house with great solemnitie, such as bonfyres, shooting of canons, and the acting of a comedy called *Mithridates, King of Pontus*, before ther Royall Hyneses, &c., wheirin Lady Anne, the Duke's daughter, and the ladies of honour ware the onlie actors."

* Genest, vol. vii., p. 120.

Lord Fountainhall, it may be mentioned, considered all such representations as exceedingly immoral.

On March 17, 1682,

“The Councill upon petition given in be William Heartly, merchand in Edinburgh, grants power and warrand to him to erect and caus build ane timber house of fourty foot of lenth, and twenty foot of breadth, upon the high street, below the Blackfrier Wynd head for showing a motion called the *Indian*, or the *German Wooks*.”

On October 27th, before this “daill-house” (wooden house) was completed the Council ordered it to be demolished, on account of complaints and petitions from the surrounding inhabitants. They also made the following important decision :—“ Doe therfor statut and ordaine, that from hencefurth noe stadg or playhouse be erected or built upon any part of the high street of this city.”

In the beginning of 1687 a mountebank of the name of Reid was baptised, along with a negro in his service, into the Roman Catholic Church. This individual, during the following year, obtained a licence from the Privy Council, and from Mr Fountain, master of the revels, to erect a booth in Blackfriars Wynd. This caused a good deal of trouble, but Reid, being Popish, found favour with those in authority, and for a while defied the popular dislike of such places.

A certain Mungo Murray was brought up for intruding, with personal violence, upon Sydserf and his company, during rehearsal, in “his hous in the Canongate, quher he keeps his theater for acting his playes.” This was in June 1689.”

In 1691 the inhabitants of Edinburgh were treated with the exhibition of three Turks, brought by Mr Mathias Sasse, a Dutchman, who obtained the Town Council’s permission to make “ane publick show” in the Canongate. And the last notice during the seventeenth century occurs on November 4th, 1692, when permission was given by William M’Lean, master of the revels, to John Arnold Carner, doctor of medicine, to erect a stage in the “Land Mercat, below the Weighhouse well,” for the selling of medicines “and his public showes;” but he was warned that “the samen be free of all offence, cursing, profanity, or anything contrare to piety.”

SECOND PERIOD,

1715 to 1746.

CHAPTER III.

TONY ASTON AND ALLAN RAMSAY.



It has been already shown that, with the permanent removal of the Court to London in 1603, the development of the Scottish Drama and Scottish Theatre, as a national growth, was materially checked, if not completely stopped. So long, however, as the Stuart dynasty occupied the throne of Britain, it manifested a pretty lively interest in the welfare of all that pertained to Edinburgh, and among other things, the Theatre was not neglected. Upon the fall of the Stuart line, there rose up a Pharaoh who knew not Auld Reekie, her Drama, her Literature, nor anything that pertained to her, and, as a result, Art was discouraged through the morbid fanaticism of the dominant portion of the populace obtaining complete supremacy. Even so early as James the First's days, all the influence of the Court was requisite to support the actors against popular prejudice. In Charles the Second's time the Theatre at Holyrood was still only a Court appendage, so it is not surprising to find that, upon the entire withdrawal of the Royal countenance and patronage, the whole theatrical system became completely paralysed.

How long it remained so it is impossible to determine. The few accounts of performances, which have been preserved, are very meagre; still it would be unsafe to assume that play-acting was ever suppressed in Edinburgh for any considerable period. The supposition that most recommends itself, after a careful consideration of all the *pros* and *cons*, is that although various periods of years may have passed by without anything being done; yet, occasionally, strolling companies of comedians would find their way to Edinburgh and perform there, until their presence became obnoxious to the Knoxites, who, imagining they smelt brimstone, speedily acted up to their creed, by

having the players banished "furth of the toun." The newspaper notices of the Drama during the first portion of last century were exceedingly few. The first one that can be found—on June 27th, 1715—shows plainly, that although it was the first advertisement about the players inserted at that period, they had been playing for some time previous to its insertion. It reads as follows:—"I am informed that on Wednesday next, the company of comedians here, are to act a diverting comedy, never acted here before, called the *Inconstant, or the Way to Win Him*." *

On the following 4th of July, *Macbeth*, "never acted here before," is announced; but this is not correct, *Macbeth* having previously been acted in Edinburgh. † In the advertisement of the 27th, we find that the Tennis Court was the place of acting, and on that particular day, "for the benefit of Mr Hall and his wife, the *Beaux' Stratagem*; with an additional farce at the end of it, called the *Stage Coach*; and several entertainments of singing and dancing by gentlemen for their diversion, and a new consort of music. To begin precisely at five o'clock, by reason of the length of the entertainments." In December the comedians appear to have removed to the old Magazine House at the back of the foot of the Canongate, and to have been joined by "some new actors just arrived from England."

There is no information to show whether these performances continued for any length of time. Writers about old Edinburgh have hitherto contented themselves with repetitions of Arnot's inaccurate account of all that happened of Dramatic interest during the first half of the eighteenth century. The chief piece of information generally given is, that Signora Violante, whom Arnot describes as a "virago," settled in Carrubber's Close about 1715, and, finding her posturing exhibitions extremely successful, added to her performances the acting of plays by a company of hired players. Then we are informed, in a general way, that, in 1727, plays were repressed. Campbell‡ evidently did not think this account sufficiently spicy, so he invented a story about a riot between Jacobites and Royalists, supposed to have occurred in 1714, during

* This advertisement (quoted from the *Courant*) forms the commencement of a rare pamphlet entitled, "Fragmenta Scoto-Dramatica" (1835), a production often ascribed to the late Mr Maidment, but really written by the late Mr W. Logan. The "Fragmenta" is an exceedingly valuable little work, as its accuracy is absolute; and I gladly take this opportunity of paying a tribute to the memory of my late friend the Author of it, many of whose papers (kindly placed at my disposal by his sister, Mrs Jordan) have been of great service in the writing of this History.

† See page 27.

‡ History of Poetry in Scotland, p. 353.

a performance of *Macbeth* in the Tennis Court. Wilson, in his Memorials, repeats this story, but it does not appear to have had any foundation in fact. Regarding Signora Violante, the date of her first settlement in Edinburgh is quite a matter of conjecture; one thing however is certain, that she cannot have been much of the "virago" Arnot calls her. She opened a dancing school, which became a very great success. Dr Carlyle of Inveresk, when a young man, attended it, and says in his Autobiography, it was "much frequented by young ladies."

The first actor who comes prominently into notice after 1715—in fact, the first in Edinburgh about whom we have any distinct information—is Anthony or "Tony" Aston or Alston. The date of his first connection with Edinburgh is uncertain, although it is evident he was acting there in 1725. This is plainly indicated in the Prologue written by Allan Ramsay for Aston's opening in 1726. The Prologue is as follows :—

"'Tis I, dear Caledonians, blythsome Tony,
That oft, last winter, pleas'd the brave and bonny,
With medley, merry song, and comic scene :
Your kindness then has brought me here again
After a circuit round the queen of isles,
To gain your friendship and approving smiles.
Experience bids me hope :—Tho' south the Tweed,
The dastards said, 'He never will succeed !
What ! such a country look for any good in !
That does not relish plays, nor pork, nor pudding !'
Thus great Columbus, by an idiot crew,
Was ridicul'd at first for his just view ;
Yet his undaunted spirit ne'er gave ground,
Till he a new and better world had found.
So I, laugh on. The Similie is good ;
But faith 'tis just ! for, 'till this body's cold,
Columbus like, I'll push for fame and gold."

It is possible, however, that Aston came to Edinburgh in 1724, for the *Caledonian Mercury* of December 10th for that year says, "We hear that last night a company of comedians came to the Canongate from London."

One curious fact about Aston's appearance in Edinburgh in 1726 has not hitherto been noticed, namely, that his performances were given with the direct permission of the Provost and Magistrates. The solution of this is a "nut" very hard to crack. How, in strait-laced Edinburgh,

the magistrates (in all ages such patterns of outward correctness), could have sanctioned a play-house, is an enigma; for the players were far from "fashionable" or "correct," save in the eyes of the intellectual few—with whom those in places of authority have seldom any affinity. Yet here is an isolated case, not only of toleration but of patronage, for it would appear that Aston settled in the town at the formal invitation of the magistrates. It is pleasant to think of the gratification such a favourable state of things must have afforded one particular man—Allan Ramsay. It is even possible that he may have been to some degree instrumental in prospering his friend Aston's fortunes. It is more probable, however, that Aston had resided in the town for many seasons, and had, by his careful and decent way of living, shown that a player *could* be a worthy citizen; and in this way gained the favour of the magistrates. Be that however as it may, Ramsay would be none the less rejoiced at the happy turn things had taken, and would very likely, making the "wish the father to the thought," imagine that the good folk of Edinburgh were at last becoming catholic-spirited in matters of art. Ramsay was a firm friend to Aston, and not only wrote one or two prologues for him, but also a pamphlet,* in which the players are ably defended against the insinuations and prejudices of the time. In this curious little publication, Ramsay sets up a liberal-minded, and at the same time readable, defence of the stage. He allows the possibility of evil arising through its influence; but contends that such a contingency was not to be looked for in Edinburgh to any degree, so long as Aston was manager and the audiences continued to be drawn from the more intellectual classes. Aston, he says, was a man of "good sense, and too cautious to disoblige a city he loves and designs as the place of his residence," by allowing anything improper. One argument frequently brought up against the players, was that they robbed the hard-working citizen of his honestly earned gains, to spend the ill gotten money on luxury, or save it up to leave the country and squander it elsewhere. Ramsay points out the foolishness of this, in a manner at once convincing, and at the same time showing pretty accurately what were the emoluments of the histrionic art in Scotland a hundred and fifty years ago. He averages the drawings at about £60 per month, or £7 or £8 each playing night; £10 or £11 being the highest, and £4 or £5 the lowest drawing each evening.

* Some Hints in defence of Dramatic Entertainments, by Allan Ramsay, 1727.

"T'is own'd," he says, "when a person of distinction has a mind to make a benefit night they may rise the height of an £18 or £20 night; but this is not frequent; but to my calculation against £15 per week for eleven persons, we must first substract at least £5 a week for the needful charges of the theatre (poor as it is at present), in rent, candle, printing bills and tickets, wright-work, servants of different kinds, &c., not to mention dues paid to the Master of the Revels and some others, wherein Mr Aston has acted honourably; who, being director and one who can afford it, has paid out above £200 for fine clothes and other things proper for his business, and has for this, as it is his due, more in the dividend than the rest; what that is we are not to enquire into, but divide £10 a week fairly amongst eleven people and what can they carry off of that I leave you to judge; but this objection I remove all at once by telling you that Mr Aston is resolved to live and die in this place." He says farther on,—“Mr Aston and his family live themselves, to my certain knowledge, with sobriety, justice, and discretion, he pays his debts without being dunn'd; is of a charitable disposition and avoids the intoxicating bottle.”

Regarding the performances given by Aston and his eleven comedians, scarcely any records remain to us. The public press of the time is almost silent regarding theatricals; but in the pages of the *Caledonian Mercury* for December 14th, 1727, we find the following:—“Yesternight an idle giddy mob got up a little below the guard-house, who, without the least shadow of provocation, insulted several persons of quality and distinction as they were passing the street to see the play called the *Earl of Essex* acted by Anthony Aston's company of comedians.”

Before this happened the Magistracy had been altered, and Aston began to experience what being in “hot water” meant. In November, notwithstanding the prohibition of the new magistrates, who did not endorse their predecessors' action, he played *Love for Love*, and announced another play for production. The “magistrates imposed a moderate fine for his contempt, discharg'd him thereafter to act any play, farce or comedy within the liberties, and caused affix a padlock upon the door of the Skinner's Hall, which he had hired and prepared for that purpose.”* Aston, however, had no intention of submitting to the ruling of the magistrates, and accordingly raised a bill of suspension in the Court of Session, in which he urged—1stly, that he had acted the preceding winter without any check, that he had been formally invited by the magistrates to do so, and that, although an alteration had happened among them since, it was not in the power of succeeding magistrates to undo what their predecessors had lawfully done; 2ndly, That as a free subject it was his birth-right to hire any house or lodging within any town of Great Britain, to act plays for his own or his neighbours' diversion, or to put any such house

* Legal paper in Mr J. Cameron's collection.

to any other use, unless it was contrary to the laws of God and man, or an encroachment upon the privileges of any incorporate society ; 3rdly, The suspender pleaded that he had the authority of the Earl of Lauderdale, Lord Somerset, and Lord Belhaven, under their sign manual, to act his plays wherever he liked, supported by the statute 39th Elizabeth.

To all this the magistrates, who had retained Charles Erskine of Tinwald,* replied that—1stly, Aston had no licence to return and act in 1727, and that verbal licences from former magistrates could not bind their successors ; 2ndly, That the privileges of the city prevent subjects, other than members of the Guild, from exercising any trade without having the particular freedom of the town ; 3rdly, That although Aston might, as an individual, exercise his right to act plays, yet that gave him no power for a company or fraternity to join themselves together without a licence from the magistrates or a charter from the king.

“Because,” as the printed “Answers” set forth, “order and good Government require that not only crimes, but whatever else may disturb the public tranquillity or be noxious to it, should be repressed, and therefore all assemblies of many persons in one body are unlawful, at least they cannot insist upon their having any right to meet as a body ; for if they could, they may meet for no other end but to concert some enterprise against the public.” The magistrates further observe, “that how innocent so ever publick diversions may be, they are certainly the occasion of drawing great assemblies of people together, and for that reason have always been considered as of very great consequence to any populous place, and it were an absurdity to suppose, that under that colour, any number of persons could insist upon it as a privilege, that they could hold assemblies and gather multitudes together in defiance of the governors of the place, or that the governors behoved to wait until a mischief was done, before they could pretend to suppress them, and that the privilege of the Peers to grant a licence was limited to England.”

In conclusion, the magistrates claimed as their exclusive right the privilege of trade, and that they had always suppressed “all publick shows, rope dancers, tumblers, and their whole tribe, excepting such as had a licence.” One curious circumstance connected with this action remains to be noted. During the previous year, 1726, while Aston was acting under the magistrates’ sanction, the Master of the Revels—for such a functionary then existed, by name Thomas Johns,—had endeavoured to stop the performances and had cited Aston before the magistrates to that end. But the worthy comedian knew very well he could defy the Master of Revels with the backing he received from the magistracy. Now he was fighting against

* Afterwards a Lord of Session and Lord Justice-Clerk, died April 5, 1763.

those who had formerly protected him, or at least their successors in office, and he must have been conscious that his chances of success were but scanty. The pleas which he put before the Lords of Session for suspension were ingenious but not weighty; and although the replies put forward by the magistrates were weak, yet the mere fact of their being brought forward ostensibly for the public weal lent them a certain importance. If judged by more tolerant laws and notions than then existed, Aston was morally in the right; and as there was really no Scots law bearing on the subject, the Lords of Session very rightly granted his bill. They had had a prettly tough knot, but who will say that they unravelled it rather in accordance with their inclination than their sense of justice? *

Aston immediately set about issuing his bills and performing as before; but the magistrates, ill-pleased with their failure, looked about for a better peg to hang their interdict upon, and they were not long in finding one, for in a few days, namely, on December 1st (1727), Lady Morrison, who lived below the Skinner's Hall, presented a petition to the magistrates complaining that the building being old and frail, the large concourses of people witnessing the plays "bended" her roof to such an extent that "her house was in danger of being destroyed by the fall of the floor." Aston was summoned to appear before the magistrates, when he insisted on Lady Morrison being put upon her oath! This, although quite in order on Aston's part, must have been considered pretty great presumption on the part of a player. The magistrates then issued a warrant to the captain of the city guard to stop any meeting in the Skinner's Hall, till the place should be visited, "and in consequence of that order the captain of the guard interrupted the play." † Fifteen skilled tradesmen all declared upon oath

* Since writing the above, the Author has found a most curious paragraph in a periodical very little known, entitled "Mist's Weekly Journal," No. 138, December 9, 1727; it is quoted in full, as it gives a most interesting account of this dispute.

"EDIN., Dec. 2,—Last Sunday the Kirk pulpits were thump'd in a violent and outrageous manner, and the case of abominations feelingly display'd with abundance of pious rhetoric on account of Tony Aston's being tolerated to entertain the *beaus* and *belles* with his comick scenes and representations. The pastors had got the magistrates on their side, and had plac'd a guard of soldiers, with their bayonets on their muskets, at the door of his Theatre, to prevent the Ladies going in, and put an end to the Acting; but the matter being brought before a higher Court, where the Ladies had a pretty considerable influence, the prohibition was taken off and Tony restor'd to his privilege of diverting the Town, as well as the more serious Drolls."

The way in which ladies were in the habit of canvassing for influence to be brought to bear on the Judges, so that verdicts might be given on a particular side of a case, is pretty well known. In such a case as this, when the Judges and legal fraternity were in sympathy with the players, there would be little difficulty in finding the verdict pronounced.

† This is probably what is referred to in "Mist's Journal." See former note.

that the walls and floors were in an unsafe condition, and were all fee'd at the town's expense for their professional opinion ! Aston, still full of spirit, had recourse again to the Lords of Session, to whom he addressed a complaint that the magistrates had not obeyed the decree of their Lordships. The civic magnates appealed against that decree, and complained that it would become "a precedent and would open doors, not only for multitudes of players, comedians ; but at the same time for Merry Andrews, Rope Dancers, Tumblers, Leaders of Bears, Munkies and other shows !" and that they being "skill-less and unacquainted in productions proper for the stage, regulations by them could not be made without being construed by *Mr Aston as an encroachment upon the liberties of mankind, and to proceed from the caprice of a Baillie*, to use a decent expression in the information formerly laid before your Lordships."

And so the war waged between the magistrates and Tony Aston, until, in the usual course of things, the weaker had to succumb to the stronger, and Aston was obliged to bid adieu to Edinburgh. That he and his company were still here in April 1728, appears from the following curious paragraph in the *Caledonian Mercury* of April 15th 1728 :—"We are well informed that the marriage of Mr Walter Aston with Mrs Jean Ker has been mutually declared. *Nota.*—Mr Aston and his father were incarcerated last week, as supposed to have enticed away that young gentlewoman."

Aston, according to his biographers, * appears to have been bred an attorney in England. He wrote a play called *Love in a Hurry*, which was acted in Smock-alley, Dublin, with no success. † That he was in Dublin in 1715 is proved by the following licence :—

(COPY OF LICENCE.)—"By the Lord Mayor of the City of Dublin, I do hereby give Liberty and Licence to Anthony Aston, gentleman, with his wife and son, and musick to exhibit and represent, within this City and the Liberties thereof, such lawful Diversions as may tend to the innocent Recreation of all those who are willing to see the same, they behaving themselves faithfully and honestly, as becomes his Majesty's Subjects. In testimony whereof I have hereunto subscribed my name, and affixed the seal of Mayoralty, this 10th day of September 1715.—(Signed) JAMES BARLOW."

Aston must have been a clever man, but, probably from want of stability of character, never made any permanent success. He roamed about all his life, and was always more or less in difficulties. An amusing story is told by Chetwood of Aston leaving a box full of stones as security with a lodging-house keeper with whom he was in debt.

* Thespian Dict. and Hist. of the Stage, by Chetwood, 1759.

† Chetwood, 1759.

To go back as far as 1719, we find Allan Ramsay writing a prologue to be “spoke by one of the young gentlemen who, for their improvement and diversion, acted the *Orphan* and *Cheats of Scapin*, the last night of the year 1719.*

Braw lads, and bonny lasses, welcome here ;
But wha's to entertain ye?—Never speer ;
Quietness is best ; tho' we be leal and true,
Good sense and wit's mair than we dare avow.
Somebody says to some fowk, we're to blame ;
That 'tis a scandal and black burning shame
To thole young callands thus to grow sae snack,
And lear—O mighty crimes !—to speak and act !
“ Stage plays,” quoth Dunce, “ are unco' things indeed ! ”
He said, he gloom'd, and shook his thick boss head.
“ They're papery, papery ! ” cry'd his nibour neist,
“ Contriv'd at Rome by some malignant priest,
To witch away fowk's minds frae doing well,
As saith Rab Ker, M'Millan, and M'Neill.”

But let them tauk :—in spite of ilk endeavour,
We'll cherish wit, and scorn their fead or favour :
We'll strive to bring in active eloquence,
Tho', for a while, upon our fame's expence :—
I'm wrang—our fame will mount with mettled carles,
And for the rest, we'll be aboon their snarls.
Knock down the fools, who dare with empty rage
Spit in the face of virtue and the stage.
'Cause heretics in pulpits thump and rair,
Must naithing orthodox b' expected there ?
Because a rump cut off a royal head,
Must not another parli'ment succeed ?
Thus tho' the drama's aft debauch'd and rude,
Must we, for some are bad, refuse the good ?
Answer me that ;—if there be ony log,
That's come to keek upon us here incog.
Anes, twice, thrice—but now I think on't, stay,
I've something else to do, and must away.
This prologue was design'd for use and sport,
The chiel that made it, let him answer for't.

Coming now to 1724, we find in the pages of the *Courant*, the following :—

* Ramsay's Works.

"We are advised from Haddington, that upon the 20th (August), the tragedy of *Cato* was acted there by the noblemen and gentlemen's children, scholars at the grammar school of that place, in presence of a great many nobility, ladies of quality, gentlemen, and other spectators. A convenient stage was erected for that purpose at the Cross, by order of the magistrates, with theatres for the honourable company. The ingenious youths acted each of them their parts with universal applause, drawing tears from the spectators in the forenoon, when they represented *Cato*, and moving their laughter as successfully in the afternoon, by a lively representation of the farce called the *Cheats of Scapin*."

In 1727, *Aurence-Zebe* and the *Drummer* were acted in the same manner; and Allan Ramsay wrote a prologue, which was "spoke" by Mr Charles Cockburn, son of Colonel Cockburn.*

"Be hush, ye crowd, who pressing round appear
Only to stare—we speak to those can hear,
The nervous phrase, which raises thoughts more high,
When added action leads them thro' the eye.
To paint fair virtue, humours, and mistakes,
Is what our school with pleasure undertakes :
Thro' various incidents of life led on
By Dryden, and immortal Addison ;
Those study'd men, and knew the various springs
That mov'd the minds of coachmen and of kings.
Altho' we're young, allow no thoughts so mean,
That any here's to act the Harlequin :
We leave such dumb-show mimicry to fools,
Beneath the sp'rit of Caledonian Schools.
Learning's our aim, and all our care to reach
At elegance and gracefulness of speech,
And the address, from bashfulness refined,
Which hangs a weight upon a worthy mind.
The grammar's good, but pedantry brings down
The gentle dunce below the sprightly clown.
'Get seven score verse of Ovid's Trist by heart,
To rattle o'er, else I shall make you smart,'
Cry snarling Dominies that little ken :
Such may teach parrots, but our Lesl' men."

In October 1728, "at the desire of several of the nobility and gentry of East Lothian, the *Beggars' Opera* will be acted at Haddington, by Mr Phipps and the rest of that company of comedians, who have been so happy as to please the ladies and noblemen of this country last sessions. To begin at four o'clock."† It is worthy of note, that this was in the year that the *Beggars' Opera* first saw light in London !

* Ramsay also wrote an epilogue, which was spoken by Mr Maurice Cockburn.

† *Courant*, 22d–24th October 1728.

Another performance is recorded on August 17th, 1731, by the young gentlemen of the grammar school, Haddington, under the direction of Mr David Young, of the tragedy of *Jane Shore*; and the scholars of the Dalkeith grammar school, on the 23rd of the same month, acted *Tamerlane* and the *Provoked Husband*.

On October 17th, 1728, the *Courant* contains the following announcement:—"We hear a new set of comedians, who have a patent from his majesty, have taken a lease of a piece of ground in the Canongate, and are there to erect a playhouse."

On Monday, July 10th 1732, the Royal Company of Archers, after shooting for the arrow, and dining together, marched to the playhouse, and "saw acted the tragedy called *Macbeath*."*

The actors who played on this occasion were very probably those who came to the city on October 17th, 1728, as noted above; although, how they contrived to escape the fate of Aston, and play until 1732, it is difficult to conceive. In 1733, they again appeared, and were evidently well known, and welcomed to the town.

The Caledonian Mercury for June 4th, 1733, contains the following:—"We are assured, that the *Edinburgh Company* of PLAYERS will open their house on Wednesday next, the 6th inst., with the *Beggars' Opera*; and that they have unanimously agreed to act on Wednesday night, the 13th, for the benefit of the Edinburgh Infirmary; the whole profits arising from that night's performance to be given in to the managers of that hospital without the least drawback."

During this year (1733), there are pretty frequent mentions of the company. On July 12th, we read:†—"The *Edinburgh Company* of PLAYERS having lately acted several of Shakespear's plays, such as *Othello*, *Hamlet*, *Henry IV.*, the *Humours of Falstaff*, &c., with great applause; we hear, they are to act to-morrow, the 13th, another of Shakespear's excellent plays, viz., *King Lear and his three daughters*."

After the summer season the company evidently went on tour, returning early in November. On the first of that month, we read,—"*The Edinburgh Company* of COMEDIANS being now all conven'd, they are to open their house Monday next, the 5th inst., with the favourite play of *Tamerlane*. The parts of *Tamerlane* and *Bajazet* to be per-

* *Caledonian Mercury*, July 11th, 1732.

† Ibid.

formed by Mess. Barret and Wescomb ; Moneses and Axalla, by Messrs Miller and Ware ; and all other parts to the best advantage."

"*Never performed before in this city.*—On Wednesday next, the 26th inst. (Dec.), at the Edinburgh Theatre, at Taylors' Hall, will be acted the *Tempest* ; or, *Inchanted Island*, with all the musick, sinkings, risings, new scenes, and other decorations proper for the performance. No persons whatsoever (but those who manage the machinery), to be admitted behind the scenes. The doors of the pit and gallery not to be opened till after 4 o'clock in the afternoon. The play to begin precisely at six o'clock."

Caledonian Mercury, December 27th.—"Yester night at the Edinburgh Theatre, to the fullest audience that has been for some considerable time, was acted the *Tempest* ; or *Inchanted Island*, with universal applause ; every part, and even what required machinery, being performed in great order."

"To-morrow, being Wednesday, 2nd inst. (January 1734), at the desire of several persons of distinction. At the Edinburgh Theatre, at Taylors' Hall, will be acted *The Miser*. The part of Lovegold, by Mr Wescomb, and all the other parts to the best advantage ; to begin precisely at six o'clock."

"This evening (Jany. 7th), at the Edinburgh Theatre, being desired by several ladies, will be acted, *The Careless Husband* ; to which will be added, the entertaining ballad-opera, *The Devil to pay* ; or, *The Wives Changed*. The parts of Jobson the cobbler, and his wife, Nell, by Mr Wescomb and Mrs Miller. The doors not to be opened till four o'clock afternoon. To begin exactly at six."

"*For the benefit of Mr Wescomb.*—On Monday next, the 28th inst. (January), at the Edinburgh Theatre, in Taylors' Hall, will be acted the *Way of the World* ; to which will be added the opera of *Flora* ; or, *Hob in the Well*. The parts of Sir Wilful Willwood, in the comedy, and of Hob, in the opera, by Mr Wescomb. The doors to be opened half an hour after 3 of the clock, and to begin exactly at 6."

"*For the benefit of Mr Bulkeley.*—To-morrow evening (Feby. 1st), will be acted, at Taylors' Hall, a play call'd *Macbeth*. To which will be added, *Flora*."

"*For the benefit of Mistress Woodward.*—At the Edinburgh Theatre, in Taylors' Hall, on Monday next, the 11th inst. (February), will be acted, *The Conscious Lovers*, a comedy by Sir Richard Steele. To which will be added, *The Devil to pay*. Jobson and Nell, his wife, by Mr Wescomb and Mrs Miller. Doors open at 4, begin at 6."

“To-morrow (being the 20th inst.), [March], at the Edinburgh Theatre, in Taylors’ Hall, will be acted for the first time, a comedy, called *The Wonder, a woman keeps a secret*. The part of the Scots Colonel, by Mr Weir; and that of his servant Gibby in Highland dress, by Mr Wescomb.”

The company appears to have remained until August, for in the *Mercury* of the 13th of that month we find :—“Early this morning the *Edinburgh Company of COMEDIANS* set out hence for Dundee, Montrose, Aberdeen, &c., in order to entertain the gentlemen and ladies, in the different stations of their circuit.”

That they were successful is pretty evident, for we read on the 5th September :—“We learn from Dundee, that the *Edinburgh Company of PLAYERS* have been well received there, and acted frequently, to the entire satisfaction of the gentlemen and ladies. Particularly, the 27th past, they played for the entertainment of the Ancient and Honourable Society of FREEMASONS, the grand master patronizing the same, by assembling all the Masons of his Lodge, and marching at their head to the play-house in their proper apparel, with hautboys and other musick before them. The *Jubilee* and *Devil to pay* were played to them, with the Freemason’s Prologue and Epilogue, and the song of an entered mason apprentice, sung in chorus by four of the company, who have the honour to be Freemasons.”

The next mention of the Company is on November 4th :—“The *Edinburgh Company of COMEDIANS* being returned from their travels, with success and a fair character, have since been busied in decorating and enlarging their stage and pit; and constantly at their rehearsals getting up fresh plays. Next Wednesday (Nov. 6th) they are to open their house with the excellent play of the *Kind Imposter*; to which will be added a comick tragedy in one act, called, *Chrononhotonthologos*. The tragedy and tickets to be had at Allan Ramsay’s shop.”

“By the *Edinburgh Company of COMEDIANS* at the Theatre in Taylors’ Hall.—To-morrow the 11th inst., will be acted a comedy, called, *The Relapse*; or, *Virtue in Danger*. To which will be added (never performed here) a Pantomime Entertainment in Grotesque Characters; being the comic part of the celebrated *Perseus and Andromeda*; Intermix’d with several diverting scenes, from *Cephalus and Procris* and the *Burgomaster trick’d*, with all the scenes, &c.”

“N.B.—By reason of the extraordinary charge the Company is at, on

account of the entertainment, nothing less than the full prices will be taken during the whole performance. The Doors not to be opened till 4 o'clock and 'tis hoped no gentleman whatever will take it amiss, if they are refused admittance behind the scenes ; it being impossible to perform the entertainment, if there is the least obstruction in that part. To begin exactly at 6 o'clock. Pit tickets at 2s. 6d., Gallery 1s. 6d. To be had at Mr Ramsay's."

Caledonian Mercury, 1735, Jan. 2nd.—"By the Edinburgh Company of Comedians, at the Theatre in Taylors' Hall.—To-morrow the 3rd inst., will be acted the comedy called *The Tempest* ; or, *The Incharnted Island*. Written originally by Shakespear, and altered by Sir William Davenant, and Mr Dryden. With all the scenes, machines, and other decorations. To be introduced by an entire new Sea Scene, with songs and musick proper for the same, also the original Furies song by M. Price and Mrs Bulkley ; with the song of Dear Pretty Youth, set to musick by the late Mr Henry Purcel. To begin exactly at 6 o'clock.

"N.B.—On account of the representation of the sea, no person whatever can be admitted behind the scenes."

"Jan. 9th.—We are assured that on Monday next will be acted at the Edinburgh Theatre, (being particularly desir'd) *The Relapse* ; or, *Virtue in Danger*, a comedy. To which will be added, the merry tragedy of *Chronohotonthologos*."

"Jan. 15th.—Yesternight the several members of the most ancient and honourable society of FREE MASONS now here, march'd in procession with aprons and white gloves, attended with flambeaux, to the play-house, Taylors' Hall, where they saw (acted at their desire) the comedy of *Henry the Fourth*."

"Jan. 22nd.—For the benefit of Mrs Bulkeley *Oroonoko* and *The Devil to Pay*. Widow Lockit—Mrs Bulkeley.

"N.B.—Mrs Bulkeley being weak and almost incapable to walk, can't acquit herself to her friends' satisfaction, yet hopes to be honoured with their presence."

"Jan. 31st.—Benefit of Mistress Weir at the Edinburgh Theatre, *The Relapse*, and a Pantomime Entertainment."

The Season must have closed soon after this, for the next entry we find is on November 18th. "To-morrow (19th) the *Tender Husband* and a new Pantomime Entertainment in grotesque characters, called the *Perplex'd Polander*, or *Columbine, a Courtezan*, the part of Harlequin by a

person who never appeared in that character on the Edinburgh stage ; Polander—Mr Bridges ; Pero—Mr Wescomb ; Columbine—Mrs Miller ; Maid—Mrs Quin. All the parts entirely new dressed. Doors open at 4, no person to be admitted behind the scenes, and no money taken under the full price."

(Dec. 18th).—By the "*Edinburgh Company of COMEDIANS.*" At the Taylor's Hall on Monday, 22nd Dec., *The Drummer* and a new Pantomime Entertainment, called, the *Hussar* or *Harlequin Restor'd*.

On Feby. 2nd, 1736, the "famous Italian rope dancer," Madam Violante, danced on the straight rope and did her "other surprising performances which have justly received the applause of the Publick these several months back." On the present occasion the performance was for the benefit of the poor of the city.

It is not stated where this performance was given ; but on Monday, Feby. 9th, the Signora is advertised to perform on the slack rope at the "new theatre" in Carrubber's Close, with a Pantomime Entertainment and several dances on the stage by Mr Hind and "Mrs" Violante. Pit 2s. 6d.

This must refer to the building which Allan Ramsay soon afterwards fitted up as a theatre. There can be no question that the present date (Feby. 1736) was prior to the time when Ramsay's alterations were commenced. The last of Signora Violante's advertisements for this season is on Feby. 25th, after which the building was remodelled.

In the *Caledonian Mercury* for September 16th, an exceedingly interesting announcement occurs :—"The new theatre in Carrubber's Close, being in great forwardness, will be opened the first of November. These are to advertise the Gentlemen and Ladies who incline to purchase Annual Tickets, to enter their names before the Twentieth of October next, on which Day they shall receive their tickets from Allan Ramsay on paying 30s. No more than forty to be subscribed for. After which none will be disposed of under two guineas."

This is the first intimation we have of Allan Ramsay's play-house—a speculation by which he lost heavily through the narrow-mindedness of the powers that then were. It should be remembered that this was the *first* regular theatrical establishment ever erected in Scotland, and that it was brought into existence by the enterprise of the poet, Allan Ramsay.

The opening was postponed to the 8th November, when the *Recruiting Officer* and the *Virgin Unmask'd* were played. Unhappily the casts have not been preserved.

In the *Mercury* of November 15th, we read as follows :—" On Monday last the New Theatre in Carrubber's Close was opened (which is thought by all judges to be as complete and finished with good taste as any one of its size in the three kingdoms) when the following Prologue was spoken by Mrs Bridges :—

"Long has it been the business of the stage
To mend our manners, and reform the age.
This task the muse by nature was assign'd,
Ere Christian light shone in upon the mind ;
Ev'n since these glorious truths to men appear'd,
Her moral precepts still have been rever'd,
And when the sacred monitors have fail'd,
Just satire from the stage has oft prevailed.
Tho' some sour criticks full of phlegm and spleen
Condemn her use as hellish and obscene ;
And from their gloomy thoughts and want of sense,
Think what diverts the mind gives Heav'n offence.
Would such from truth and reason form their sample
They'll find what's meant for precept, what example,
Nor think when vice and folly shall appear
The characters were drawn for them to wear !
Fools in their native follies should be shewn,
And vice must have its language to be known.
To such this lesson then we recommend,
Let each mend one the stage will have its end,
Good sense shall flourish, Reason triumphant reign,
And hypocrites no more their power maintain,
The muse shall once again resume her throne,
And our stage vie with Athens or with Rome.
Long in those realms she held her rapid flight,
Filling their minds with profit and delight !
Till in despight of sense and with disgrace,
Dull Ignorance awhile usurp'd her place,
For many ages bore the palm alone,
And with buffoons defiled her sacred throne.
But late at length she reach'd Britannia's shore,
And Shakspeare taught her once again to soar.
At last transplanted by your tender care,
She hopes to keep her seat of Empire here.
To your protection then, ye fair and great,
This fabrick to her use we consecrate :
On you it will depend to raise her name,
And in Edina fix her lasting fame."

On December 17th, Madame Violante is advertised to give six per-

formances in the Old Assembly Hall, and on "Monday next" (Dec. 20th) for her benefit "will be performed several new and surprising entertainments on the strait rope by herself as she did at London for 3 years successively before the late King," &c.

" 1. She dances a minuet on the rope as neatly as can be danced on the floor.

" 2. A dance upon a board laid upon the rope, without its being any-way fasten'd thereto.

" 3. A dance with two boys fastened to her feet.

" 4. A dance on the rope with 2 as heavy men as any in town fastened to her feet.

" 5. She dances on the rope with 2 swords at her feet.

" 6. She performs the exercise of the colours on the rope, to the surprise of all spectators. To begin at 6. Price 2s. 6d."

After this season she seems to have resided permanently in Edinburgh, as a teacher of dancing, until her death in 1741.

What fortune Allan Ramsay's theatre may have had, during its brief existence of little more than six months, is unknown. That it was shut up immediately on the passing of the New Act, * 10 Geo. II. cap. 28, June 24, 1737, is certain. Ramsay must have lost heavily by his speculation, and was no doubt much annoyed at the frustration of his darling project. He contented himself however, so far as the public was concerned, with writing the following address :—

† To the Honbl. Duncan Forbes of Culloden, Lord-President of the Session, and all other judges, who are careful of the honour of the Government, and the property of the subject : Humbly means and shews—

To you, my Lords, whase elevation
Makes you the wardens of the nation,
While you with equal justice stand,
With Lawtie's balance in your hand ;—
To you, whase penetrating skill
Can eithly redd the good frae ill,
And ken them weel whase fair behaviour
Deserve reward and Royal favour,
As like you do, these stonherd fellows,
Wha merit naithing but the gallows ;—
To you, with humble bow, your bard,
Whase greatest brag is your regard,
Begs leave to lay his case before ye,
And for an outgate to implore ye.

* See Appendix.

† *Gentleman's Magazine*, 1737, p. 507.
D

Last year, my Lords, nae farrer gane,
 A costly wark was undertane
 By me, wha had not the least dread
 An Act wad knock it on the head :
 A play-house new, at vast expense,
 To be a large, yet bein defence,
 In winter nights, 'gainst wind and weet,
 To ward frae cauld the lassies sweet,
 While they with bonny smiles attended,
 To have their little failures mended ;
 Where satire, striving still to free them,
 Hads out his glass to let them see them.
 Here, under rules of right decorum,
 By placing consequence before 'em,
 I kept our troop, by pith of reason,
 Frae bawdy, Atheism, and treason,
 And only preach'd frae moral fable,
 The best instruction they were able ;
 While they by doctrine linsy-woolsy
 Set aff the *utile* with *dulce*.

And shall the man to whom this task falls,
 Suffer amang confounded rascals,
 That, like vile adders, dart their stings,
 And fear nae God, nor honour kings ?
 Shall I, wha for a tract of years
 Have sung to commons and to peers,
 And got the general approbation
 Of all within the British nation,
 At last be tin'd of all my hopes
 By them who wont to be my props ?
 Be made a loser, and engage
 With troubles in declining age ;
 While wights, to whom my credit stands
 For sums, make sour and thrawin demands ?
 Shall London have its houses twa,
 And we be doom'd to 've nane ava ?
 Is our metrop'lis, anes the place,
 Where longsine dwelt the royal race
 Of Fergus, this gate dwindled down
 T' a level with ilk clachan town,
 While thus she suffers the subversion
 Of her maist rational diversion ?
 When ice and snaw o'ercleads the isle,
 Wha now will think it worth their while
 To leave their gowsty country bowers

For the anes blythsome Edinburgh's towers,
Where there's no glee to give delight,
And ward frae spleen the langsome night ?
For which they'll now have nae relief,
But sonk at hame, and cleck mischief.

Is there ought better than the stage
To mend the follies of the age,
If managed as it ought to be,
Frae ilka vice and blaidry free ?
Which may be done with perfect ease,
And nought be heard that shall displease,
Or give the least offence or pain,
If we can hae't restored again.

Wherefore, my Lords, I humbly pray
Our lads may be allowed to play,
At least till new-house debts be paid off,
The cause that I'm the maist afraid of ;
Which laide lyes on my single back,
-And I may pay it ilka plack.

Now, its but just the legislature
Should either say that I'm a faulter,
Or thole me to employ my bigging,
Or of the burden ease my rigging,
By ordering, frae the public fund,
A sum to pay for what I'm bound ;
Syne, for amends for what I've lost,
Edge me into some canny post,
With the good liking of our king,
And your petitioner shall—sing.

Although Allan Ramsay quietly submitted, and discontinued his connection with actors and acting, it should be recollected that he could afford to do so, as he did not depend upon the stage for his daily bread. Not so, however, the members of his late company. This little band of outlaws, as they might fitly be termed, struggled desperately to earn the few shillings that were necessary to keep them alive, and which they knew no way of obtaining save by "play-acting." A blank of two years occurs in our sources of information, but on January 9th, 1739, one John Morison, the *Caledonian Mercury* informs us, was committed by order of the Rt. Hon. the Lord Provost, for "presuming to put up placards (placards) within this city," advertising "That at night the Comedy, called the *Care-*

less Husband," would be acted in Carrubber's Close, by Messrs Gifford, senr. and junr., Messrs Millar, Thomson, Waldegrave, Alison, Mrs Woodward, Mrs Gifford, Mrs Millar, and Miss Thomson.* Also that the above and other persons had last Friday acted the Tragedy of *Macbeth*, in open defiance of a late law, therefore the Provost and Magistrates sent the city officers to summon the whole *dramatis personæ* to appear in the Council Chamber. The *Caledonian Mercury* cannot let such an opportunity slip without having its little joke at the expense of the poor players, and says, it will let its readers know in the next number how they ACT before the Magistrates. Of course the Presbytery at once indulged in their favourite occupation of persecution, to which end they empowered their clerk to prosecute in their name.

The actors meantime, who had many friends among the legal fraternity, contrived to stave off the proceedings with partial success. The Lords of Session were appealed to, and numerous summonses were issued, including one against an attorney named Marriot, who had threatened to throw a city officer out of a window, when the latter visited the theatre in order to cite the company before the magistrates. But the object of the comedians was plainly to keep open their theatre as long as possible, and reap what harvest they could before taking up their beds and walking. To gain time they lived within the sanctuary of the Abbey, thus making it difficult for the officers of the law to serve summonses, &c. on them; but the end came at last, and on March 2nd, the Court found the complaint proven, and the defenders liable to a fine of £50 sterling each, the fine to be levied by distress or sale of their goods and gear; and in case their moveables should not prove sufficient, the defenders were to be imprisoned for three months. The *Caledonian Mercury* adds to its account of this, that "as the decret was ordered to be summarily extracted, they have already begun to file off!"

This was a black look-out for those who loved the play, and naturally set a number of people a-thinking whether nothing could be done to alter such a state of matters. The only thing possible was to get a special playhouse bill passed. A very influential party, including many noblemen, gentlemen, merchants, citizens, and burgesses, accordingly petitioned in favour of a bill for enabling His Majesty to grant letters patent for erecting a theatre; but on the other hand, the magistrates, the clergymen, and the University petitioned against it; and so, although Lord Glenorchy brought

* Mrs Bulkeley was also of the company.

into the House of Commons the said bill for a playhouse, the same being read for the first time on the 4th April, the influence was too strong against it, and it was allowed to drop.

The performances, in the same year (1739), of one Thomas Topham, a "strong man," who did wondrous feats of letting four men stand on his body, lifting a table six feet long by the strength of his teeth, and so on, need not be chronicled here, beyond the bare mention of the fact that he seemed to enjoy much popularity.

Until December 21st, 1741, not another mention of the Drama in Edinburgh is to be found; on that day, however, the following advertisement clearly shows that acting had again been tried with some small degree of success;—

"Just published, price one shilling, Humbly inscribed to her Royal Highness the Princess Amelia.

"PAMELA. A comedy, which after being performed many nights at London was introduced to the Theatre in Edinburgh last Friday where it was received with great applause and is to be performed again to-night."*

The company that played *Pamela* seems to have been under the management of Thomas Este. Who this gentleman was it is difficult to say, for his identity must not be confounded with that of William Este, mentioned by Chetwood, and who died in 1742-3.

Thomas Este lived till 1745 (see page 55), and till that date continued as manager in Edinburgh.

"On March 13th, 1742, By desire of his Grace the Duke of Hamilton, for the benefit of the Master Hamiltons, at the Taylors' Hall, will be perform'd a Concert of Vocal and Instrumental Musick, after which, gratis, *She wou'd and she wou'd not*, to which will be added, by desire, the *Honest Yorkshireman*, performed by Liliputians."

March 16th, at the Taylors' Hall, "was represented the tragedy of *Cato* to a fuller house than was ever known in that place. The fine sentiments of this play, met with that applause, which they deserved from every free Briton. The Ladies particularly distinguished themselves by their virtuous distress. *Cato* drew tears from the fairest eyes."

Some lines were written and published at the time, "On seeing Boys act the Tragedy of *Cato*," but are scarcely worth reprinting. †

The Company was again acting in October, for on the 8th we read, ‡

* *Caledonian Mercury*.

† See *Fragmenta Scoto-Dramatica*.

‡ *Ibid*.

the *Beggars' Opera* was "played to the entire satisfaction of the audience, who were so well pleased with the performance, that they desired it might be acted again on the following Monday."

In December "we hear that the Company belonging to the Concert in Taylors' Hall have been at a considerable charge in getting up that celebrated entertainment, called the *Negromancer*, or *Harlequin Doctor Faustus*; which will be performed next Friday, in the same manner as it was originally done at the Theatre Royal in Lincoln's-inn-fields."

From all that can be gathered, Este seems to have been a capable manager and unquestionably smart. The device he had hit upon of charging the audience, not to see the play, but to listen to a concert of "vocal and instrumental music," was clever, and served to evade the obnoxious statute upon which Allan Ramsay and his Company had been wrecked. From Este's advent in Edinburgh, in 1741, to the present day, there has been an unbroken succession of theatrical seasons year by year, and until 1767, when the patent was procured, this was due alone to the scheme of performing the plays *gratis* after the first part of the concert.

Mrs Hamilton's benefit took place on the 31st January 1743, the *Mourning Bride* and the *Toy Shop* being given *gratis*. Mr Lyon followed on February 9th, with *Provoked Husband* and the *Devil to pay* for his benefit.

Feby. 21st, at the desire of several ladies of distinction, "will be performed a concert of Vocal and Instrumental Music. After which will be given, *gratis*, *Richard the Third*, containing several historical passages, to which will be added, *gratis*, the *Mock Lawyer*. Tickets for the concert (on which are printed a new device, called the *Apology* and *Evasion*), to be had at the Exchange and John's coffee houses; and at Mr Este's lodgings, at Mr Monro's, musician, in the Cowgate, near Taylors' Hall. As Mrs Este's present condition will not admit of personal application, she hopes the ladies, notwithstanding, will grace her concert."

An interesting paragraph occurs in the newspapers of February 22nd, calling a meeting of the creditors of David Beatt, merchant, for March 10th. This individual figures prominently in the after history of the Drama in Edinburgh. Only two other entries occur during 1743: on February 24th, *King Lear* and the *Mock Lawyer* were played for the benefit of the Master Hamiltons; and on the 28th, the *Wedding Day*, never acted here before.

The next mention we have of the Drama is the announcement of the *Fair Penitent*, on February 1st, 1744, when, "for the better accommodation of the ladies, the stage will be ornamented in a handsome manner, and illuminated with wax light."

"*N.B.*—There is opened into Scot's close, a convenient passage for the accommodation of ladies' chairs being set down at the pit and stage doors."

This performance was for the benefit of Mrs Hamilton, who, after the announcement, states, "on account of her lingering illness, under which she has laboured for some months, being incapable of waiting on the ladies in person, she humbly hopes for a continuance of the favours, which she hath formerly received on the like occasion."

"Feby. 9th.—For the benefit of the poor in the new erected house in Edinburgh,* to-morrow, being Friday the 17th inst., will be given, gratis, the *Orphan*, with a farce, called the *Devil to pay*. As the managers of this concert are willing to throw in their mite towards the great and charitable work, it is hoped the same generous spirit that has hitherto appeared in support of so noble an undertaking, will now likewise exert itself on this occasion, that the concert may thereby answer the purpose for which it is intended."

On Tuesday next, the 6th March, at the particular desire of a lady of quality, for the benefit of Mrs Este, at the Taylors' Hall, in the Cowgate, will be a Concert of Vocal and Instrumental Musick. After which, will be given, *gratis*, a tragedy, not acted this season, called the *Mourning Bride*; with entertainments between the Acts, by M. Froment and Madame Dumont. And a new farce, call'd *Sir John Cockle at Court*; or, the sequel to *The Miller of Mansfield*; with an humorous Epilogue in the character of Nobody, to be spoken by Mrs Este.

Nothing further is heard of the comedians or their doings until the 11th February of the following year,† when by desire of a lady of quality, for the benefit of Mrs Hamilton, at the Taylors' Hall, *Venice Preserved*; Jaffier = Hughes; Pierre = Lyon; Belvidera = Mrs Hamilton; with dancing by Miss Thomson.

On the day previous to this performance taking place, namely, on Sunday 10th "about 6 in the evening, died Mr Thomas Este, one of the managers of the Concert in the Taylors' Hall, who has for these 4

* This refers to the Charity Workhouse erected the previous year.

† *Caledonian Mercury*, February 7th, 1745.

years past most agreeably entertained the town with his excellent performances on the stage. As he was a most indulgent and affectionate husband, a tender father, a sincere friend, and a facetious and agreeable companion, his death is greatly lamented by all who had the pleasure of his acquaintance."*

On March 13th, *Tunbridge Walks*, or the *Yeoman of Kent*, and the *Lottery*, with dancing by Mons. Froment and Miss Thomson, for the benefit of Master William Hamilton, by desire of His Grace the Duke of Hamilton.

"By desire of several persons of distinction. April 3rd.—The *Constant Couple*, or *A Trip to the Jubilee*, &c., with *Harlequin Skeleton*; concluding with a grand dance, called *Pigmalion*, for the benefit of Mons. Froment, and last night of playing this season. Tickets at old John's and Exchange coffee houses, and Mons. Froment's school in Bailie Fife's Close. Pit, 2/6; Gallery, 1/6." Mr Este seems to have had a second benefit, when *The Wrangling Lovers*, or *Like Master Like Man*, a farce, was performed. This was the production of William Lyon, a member of the company, and was published by him during the same year (1745), and printed for him by R. Drummond. In the preface he expressly states that it was compiled from Vanburgh's *Mistake* for Mr Este's benefit. As a farce it is far from being destitute of merit, and under the name of *Lovers' Quarrels* was played for many years in the Edinburgh Theatre.

With this, the records of the Taylors' Hall may be said to end. Occasional notices of performances there crop up from time to time; but the Canongate was destined as the future home of the Drama in Edinburgh, and to that locality we must now turn our attention.

* *Caledonian Mercury*, February 12th.

THIRD PERIOD,

1746 to 1769.

CHAPTER IV.

CANONGATE CONCERT HALL, 1746-1751.



WE now arrive at a period in Scottish History, the main features of which are well known. Prince Charlie's romantic and quixotic expedition has not got much to do with the "Annals of the Edinburgh Stage," save inasmuch that it caused such intense excitement at the time, that nearly everything else was neglected, and in particular, the newspapers had no space in which to record the doings of the players.

The play-house, however, despite the Pretender and his hungry Highlanders, seems to have been kept open, and it is most probable that during the year 1746 Mrs Ward, the actress, first came to Edinburgh. Arnot, in his History of Edinburgh, states that Ryan, from Covent Garden, laid the foundation stone of a new Theatre in the Canongate in 1746, and Maitland assures us, that this house was completed and opened during the following year. This information is most likely correct, as is also Arnot's further statement, that the building of the new house was undertaken in consequence of a split in the company at Taylors' Hall, and that the best of the actors went with Mrs Ward to the Canongate, while a remnant stayed behind in their old quarters.

Dr Carlyle, in his "Autobiography," makes an interesting mention of the company in Edinburgh in 1746. He had been to London, and to the theatres there, and speaking of the English performers says:—"Mrs Pritchard, Mrs Clive, and Macklin, were all excellent in their way ; but I had seen Hughes and Mrs Hamilton in Edinburgh, and whether or not it might be owing to first impressions, I then thought that they were not surpassed by those I saw in London."

Regarding the new Concert Hall in the Canongate, it is extremely unfortunate that about the first few years of its existence, so little infor-

mation can be had. Save what is given above, the whole of the circumstances of its building, as well as the names of its builders and promoters, are apparently lost. Haply, at some future date, unsuspected sources of information may be unearthed for our edification and satisfaction. In the mean time we must be content with only the most meagre accounts—even the title deeds of the Concert Hall property throw no light upon the matter, not even the date of its building being mentioned.*

One thing however is certain, that Mrs Ward was a member of the first company of players who “strutted and fretted their hour upon its stage,” for she was announced at Covent Garden, in the autumn of 1748, as “from Edinburgh.” Of this actress, who spent much of her life in the provinces, little has hitherto been written; her connection with Edinburgh was long and intimate, and will be fully chronicled in the following pages. Regarding her career prior to the period now treated of, not much can be gathered. In 1731, she was acting in Dublin along with Mr Ward, her husband; again, in 1735, we find her in the same city, but from that date to 1747, when she was unquestionably in Edinburgh, there is no information as to her whereabouts. In 1745, however, there was published in Edinburgh, by R. Drummond, an opera, called *The Happy Lovers*; or, the *Beau Metamorphos’d*, by Henry Ward, comedian; and in the same year, the *Petticoat-Plotter*; or, *More ways than one for a wife*, a farce in two Acts, also by Ward, who probably was the husband of the actress. It is questionable if these pieces were performed in Edinburgh at the time of publication, for in the list of characters no performers’ names are inserted. The name of Hugh Hughes, comedian, however, is among the list of subscribers to *The Happy Lovers*. By this it seems quite possible that Ward and his wife were located in Edinburgh, and even acting, as early as the autumn of 1745.

The name of Drummond is directly connected with the next piece of information we have regarding the Edinburgh Stage. The following Extract from the *Scots Magazine* of November 1747, sufficiently well introduces the matter:—

“A defamatory poem having appeared about the middle of November, several of the copies were seized, and Robert Drummond, printer, was taken up and accused of being the publisher. The Bailies before whom the matter was brought, found that the poem contained many scandalous, false, seditious, calumnious, and malicious expressions, tending most unjustly to defame George Drummond, Esq., present Lord Provost of Edin.; Walter Grosset, Inspector General

* I am indebted to John Glover, Esq., S.S.C., for his kindness in ransacking these musty documents for me.

of the Customs ; Prin. Wishart, Messrs Logan, Glen, and Webster, Ministers of Edinburgh ; and others of still higher and more respectable characters ; and that it was printed and published by the said Robert Drummond. Therefore, they ordained him to be carried to Prison, and hence, on the 25th November, betwixt the hours of 12 and 1, to the Cross of Edinburgh, there to stand bareheaded, with a label on his breast inscribed thus, *For printing and publishing a false, scandalous, and defamatory libel*, till all the copies seized of the poem should be burnt by the hangman ; then to lie in prison till he should give bond to remove out of the city and liberties, and not to return for a year, on pain [of] £100 stg."

An application was made to the Court of Justiciary for an alteration of this sentence, but without effect, and the whole penalty was strictly enforced. Drummond's printing house being shut up, and his journeymen and apprentices idle in consequence, they put their heads together and managed to perform the *Gentle Shepherd* at the Concert Hall,* for their master's benefit. Public feeling in favour of Drummond ran pretty high at the time, and the party who considered Drummond's sentence too severe, turned out in large numbers to the play, and demanded its repetition on several succeeding evenings. So great were the audiences, that galleries or amphitheatres had to be erected on the stage to accommodate them.

Arnot mentions that the new Concert Hall was built on credit. This is very probable, and gains special likelihood from the evidence of the following announcement in the columns of the *Caledonian Mercury* :—†

"By particular desire, in order to pay part of the expense of erecting the New Concert Hall. At the Concert Hall in the Canongate, on Monday next, being the 23rd current, will be performed a CONCERT OF MUSICK.

"N.B.—Tickets for the Concert to be had at the Coffee-houses, and at Mr Shore's at the foot of the Canongate, and at Mr Hinde's House, the Boar's head Tavern in Leith.

"After the first part of the Concert will be presented (*gratis*) the true and ancient *History of King Lear and his Three Daughters*, written by Shakespear. The part of King Lear to be performed by Mr Lacey ; Gloster by Mr Philips ; Edgar (*alias* Mad Tom)=Mr Davies ; Cordelia =Mrs Crofts ; with Entertainments of Dancing by Monsieur Picq and Mademoiselle De Frene.

"To which will be added (*gratis*) a Tragi-Comi-Pastoral Farce, called the *What d'ye call it*. Thomas Filbert by Mr Lacey ; Jonas Dock by Mr Philips."

* This statement is made on the authority of Arnot.

† Jany. 1749.

"At the Concert Hall, &c., January 25th. The *Fair Penitent*. Sciolto = Davies ; Horatio = Philips ; Lothario = Lacey ; Calista = Mrs Hamilton ; and *The Hussar*, or *Harlequin Restor'd*. Harlequin = Crofts ; Hussar = Philips ; Petit Maitre = Lacey ; Columbine = Mrs Davenport.

"All the scenes, machines, and dresses entirely new. No less than full price will be taken during the whole performance."

"For the benefit of Mrs Hamilton on February 13th, *Venice Preserved*. Jaffier = Lacey ; Pierre = Davies ; Belvidera = Mrs Hamilton."

"On February 15th, for the benefit of Mr Philips, *Hamlet*. At the particular desire of several Gentlemen and Ladies, the Scene of Hamlet's Instructions to the Players will be restor'd. Hamlet = Lacey ; Ghost = Davies ; Ophelia = Mrs Hamilton ; Gravedigger = Philips ; with a new Epilogue written by Somebody and spoke by Nobody. To which will be added a Farce, called *Miss in Her Teens*."

On February 22nd, Mrs Crofts took her benefit and played Miss Jenny in *The Provok'd Husband*. Townley = Lacey ; Manly = Davies ; Sir F. Wronghead = Philips ; Lady Townley = Mrs Hamilton.

February 24th, *The Way of the World*. Marwood = Mr Hamilton. And on the 27th, for the benefit of Mrs Berry, *Zara*, and the *Lying Valet*.

For the first of March we have recorded a very full cast of *King Henry IV*. "By desire of several Gentlemen and Ladies a scene of humour between the Prince of Wales and Falstaff will be restored." Hotspur = Lacey ; King Henry = Crofts ; Prince John = Mrs Berry ; Worcester = Hinde ; Sir R. Vernon = Davenport ; Sir Walter Blunt = Hamilton ; Prince of Wales = Davies ; Douglas = W. Hamilton ; Bardolph = Waldegrave ; Francis = Berry ; Sir John Falstaff = Philips ; Lady Piercy = Mrs Crofts ; Hostess = Mrs Davenport.

"To which will be added (*gratis*) a Pantomime Entertainment, in grotesque characters, called, *Pigmalion* ; or, *Columbine Restor'd* : with the tricks and escapes of Harlequin. Harlequin = Crofts ; 1st, 2nd, 3rd, and 4th Masons by Messrs Thomson, Hinde, Waldegrave, and W. Hamilton ; Pigmalion = Picq ; Columbine = Mrs Davenport ; Scaramouch = Johnston ; Old Woman = Davenport ; Clown = Berry. Tickets of Mr Thomson at his house in the area of the Concert Hall."

On March 10th, Monsieur Picq had a benefit, when was played *The Conscious Lovers*, and on the 14th Mdlle. D'efrene* had *Richard the Third*.

* This variation in the spelling is copied exactly as printed in the announcements.

King Richard = Lacey, "being the last time of his appearing in that character this season, with singing by a young gentleman who never appeared on any stage before."

On March 29th, Miss Este had a benefit, when she played Tom Thumb in Fielding's *Tragedy of Tragedies*, and on April 4th, *Cato* was announced, with Mr Davies in the title part; being his first appearance in it.

Previous to this Lacey took his benefit on Friday, March 31st, *Tancred and Sigismunda* (not acted this season), written by the late ingenious Mr Thomson (author of "The Seasons"). Tancred = Lacey; Osmond = Philips; Siffredi = Davies; Sigismunda = Mrs Crofts.

"April 7th.—*Hamlet*. Hamlet = Lacey; and a Dramatick Satire, never acted here, called *Lethe*; or, *Æsop in the Shades*, by Mr Garrick. Æsop = Philips; The Fine Gentleman = Davies; French Marquis = Lacey; Drunken man = Crofts; Mrs Riot = Mrs Crofts; Mrs Tattoo = Mrs Davenport. To begin half-an-hour after 6 o'clock."

Lethe was repeated, along with the *Suspicious Husband*, for the benefit of Mr Davenport, on April 10th, and on May 5th, being positively the last concert but one that will be this season, for the benefit of Mr Davies and Mr Philips, *Othello*, *Moor of Venice* (not acted this season). By particular desire the trance scene will be restor'd. The part of Othello = Davies; Iago = Philips. After the 3rd act, the Minuet and Louvre; by Mrs Davenport and Mdle. De Frene (in men's cloaths)."

"For the benefit of a distress family, May 10th, *The Distrest Mother*, with a new farewell Epilogue of thanks to the town, to be spoke by Mr Philips."

"N.B.—The proprietors of the Concert Hall intended to have concluded the season with the last concert, and humbly to have taken leave of the town, with thanks for the many favours received; but as there is a particular family whose distresses demand particular relief they humbly hope, the giving out this one concert will not offend, which will positively be the last, till the winter season."*

It was during the progress of this season that there took place one of the most remarkable of the many disturbances which, from time to time, occurred in the Edinburgh Theatre.

Regarding it a letter is published in the *Caledonian Mercury*, dated April 19th, as follows:—

* *Caledonian Mercury*.

"SIR,—As a stranger in Edinburgh, I was willing to pass an evening in the Concert Hall in the Canongate ; and as *Henry IV.* is a favourite play, I made choice of Monday last (April 17th), when the same was performed, and had the pleasure to see the different characters performed properly enough : After which the concert bills made me believe that a pantomime was to be the next part of my entertainment ; but (as it often happens) the machinery was not in order, for an immediate appearance : and instead of dumb show, the Company had the joy, *particularly the Ladies*, to be entertain'd with the *prettiest* representation of the *Man of Honour*, according to Garrick's taste, perform'd by a select number of *moving genteel wax-work things*, who with the *greatest* spirit strutted a while on the stage, and, by touching a certain *spring*, drew their swords, *damn'd the fiddlers*, and in the most polite manner, tore the candles from their sockets, tos'd them to all the corners of the theatre, and after several *flashes* appearing, common enough upon the stage, the whole concluded with one immense *peal of thunder*, which gave the greatest satisfaction to the spectators, and particularly to all the men of taste who are lovers of decency and decorum in polite assemblies. I would not have troubled you with an account of this entertainment, but that the members of the Concert Hall should, next time of performing the above interlude give notice of it to the publick in their bills, that every gentleman who intends to be present, should strictly prohibit his footman from carrying Potatoes, dried Limon-skins, or any such implements of disturbance with them, that the performers may exhibit with the greater safety.

Yours,

DUMBO."

In the above humorous narrative we have the particulars of the famous "Culloden" riot, which Arnot, in his "History of Edinburgh," describes at some length. His account of it is that certain military gentlemen, who were at the play, called upon the band to play the tune "Culloden," upon which some disturbance arose among the civilian portion of the audience, who, in their turn, ordered the musicians to strike up "You're welcome, Charles Stuart." This command the orchestra immediately obeyed, whereupon the officers drew their swords, drove the fiddlers from their seats, and then leaped upon the stage. Among the first of these over-zealous loyalists was the son of a chieftain who had been instrumental in drawing the Pretender to the rash attempt of '45, but who, soon after, deserted the cause and joined the Hanoverians. This young gentlemen leaping upon the stage with the rest, slipped his foot and fell on his back, an incident which was greeted by an immense peal of laughter from the audience. The officers by this time, through mortification and alcoholic passion, being unable to cope with the storm of missiles which greeted them from all parts of the house, took to the gallery stairs, determined to punish the inhabitants of that lofty region. The celestials, ever gifted with superior wit, chose to sport their oak rather than fight an unequal contest against drunken soldiers and naked blades. Accordingly they tore up forms and barricaded their door securely against the intruders, who had scarcely mounted the stairs when they found themselves attacked in the rear by the

Highland chairmen, armed with their chair poles, who, being all staunch Jacobites, lost no time in avenging the misfortunes of their hero. The officers being unable to advance or retreat had to surrender at discretion, leaving the chairmen masters of the field. An announcement was posted up next day forbidding the band to play any music except what had been appointed by the management.

Davies, Phillips, and Lacey all left at the close of this season (1748-9). Mrs Hamilton, however, stayed on, and Mr Conyers came in Lacey's place as lead.

On the 2nd October, 1749, *The Provok'd Husband* was acted for the purpose of trying the qualities of a young lady, who was anxious to join the company ; she essayed the part of Lady Townly ; but whether she was successful, or who she was, is not recorded.

The regular season opened on November 17th with the *Constant Couple*. Sir Harry Wildair by Mr Conyers, his first appearance on this stage ; Lurewell by Mrs Hamilton. To begin at 6 o'clock.

"N.B.—Annual tickets for the pit at £1, 10s., and gallery at 18s., to be had at the Exchange Coffee House."

On the 21st, in addition to the *Beaux Stratagem*, there was played for the first time a pantomime entertainment called the *Hussar*, or *Harlequin's Escape into a Pint Bottle*, as it was performed 40 nights together at the Theatre Royal in Covent Garden. Harlequin by Mr Conyers.

A benefit was given for the unfortunate R. Drummond, printer (see page 60), on the 17th February 1750, *Richard III.* being the piece, in which Conyers played Richard, Stevens—King Henry, Waldgrave—Buckingham, and Mrs Hamilton—Queen Elizabeth. With dancing by Mdlle. D'Efrene, and singing by Mr Conyers, and a new Epilogue by Mr Stevens, entitled "A Rake's True Picture."

Mr Thomson took his benefit on March 14th, and presented *The Tempest*, "written originally by Shakspeare and alter'd by Sir William Davenant and Mr Dryden, late Poet Laureate." Trinculo = Salmon ; The Grand Singing Devil = Conyers ; Ariel = Mrs Salmon ; Neptune = Conyers ; Amphitrite = Mrs Hinde. With all the original music composed by the late Mr Purcel, and all other decorations proper to the play. To begin at 6 o'clock.

Mrs Hamilton's non-appearance at Mr and Mrs Salmon's benefit about this time brought forth some curious paragraphs in the columns of the *Caledonian Mercury*. Considerable jealousy seems to have existed

between the two ladies, but on what score does not plainly appear. Some time after (April 30th), Mrs Hamilton wrote to the editor disclaiming all participation in and knowledge of the dispute.*

By an advertisement on June 14th, we learn that a garden, after the manner of Ranelagh, was opened at Lauriston—Lauriston Gardens. It was opened on the 12th with a public breakfasting, and on the 15th a concert of music was given in the evening. “No person to be admitted without printed tickets, sixpence each. To begin at 6 o’clock.”

On the 25th there was advertised a four hours’ entertainment, “The Ladies and Gentlemen to be entertained with Coffee, Tea, and Tea-bread, and a good band of music, accompanied with two French Horns.” The charge for this extraordinary entertainment was 1s. Thomson was the name of the projector of this concern, but whether this was Thomson the actor or not is not certain. Concerts in Heriot’s Gardens were advertised some little time after ; perhaps they were in opposition to the enterprise at Lauriston.

The *Beggars’ Opera* was advertised to be given at the Concert Hall, Canongate, on July 30th. Polly by Mrs Storer, Captain Macheath by Mrs Hamilton, and Lucy by Mrs Lampe, and to be repeated with the same cast on August 6th. It is impossible, however, that these performances ever took place. Mrs Storer certainly did not arrive in Edinburgh until November 5th, Mr Lampe accompanied her, and Mrs Lampe, who had been taken ill in Dublin, very likely followed soon after.

Mrs Storer appears to have been a singer of very considerable ability, and possessed in addition an agreeable person.† She first appeared on the stage at Dublin in 1743. In 1747, she played Polly in the *Beggars’ Opera* at Covent Garden, and seems to have made a hit, as it was performed pretty often during the season. In 1749 we find her again in Dublin, having been engaged along with Mr and Mrs Macklin, Mrs Bland, Miss Minors, Mr and Mrs Mozeen, Signor Pasquali, and Mr and Mrs Lampe. According to Victor,‡ this company was a failure, and although we have it on the same authority that it was engaged for two years, Genest§ says the musical portion (which included Mrs Storer, Mr and Mrs Lampe, &c.) left the theatre at the end of the first season (1749). They certainly performed at concerts in Dublin in 1749-50, so Genest is probably wrong in his statement. After their two years’ engagement was out, Sheridan did not re-engage them, and Edinburgh became their destination.

* *Caledonian Mercury*.

‡ Hist. of the Theatres of London and Dublin.

† Genest, vol. x. 322.

§ Genest, vol. x. 368.

So on the 24th September we read in the *Caledonian Mercury* as follows ;—

“Whereas, Hen. Thomson and Thomas Davie, have purchased of the proprietors of the NEW CONCERT HALL all their right, title, and interest in the same together with all the cloaths, scenes, and everything else thereunto belonging, they humbly beg leave to inform the nobility and gentry, &c., that having engaged several new actors, singers, dancers, &c., they shall open the said hall under their direction on Monday the 29th October, with a concert of musick, after which will be given *gratis*, *The Beggars' Opera*. The part of Polly by Mrs Storer, and Lucy by Mrs Lampe, with several new entertainments of dancing.

“N.B.—The Orchestra will be enlarged, and the voice accompanied with a Harpsicord, on which Mr Lampe is to perform. Thirty annual tickets for the pit and boxes, and twenty for the gallery, will be delivered out for the year ensuing ; which are to be had at John's Coffeehouse ; pit and boxes at two guineas, and gallery at one.”

“The managers engage that there will be at least thirty concerts, exclusive of benefits.”

The Theatre did not however open on the 29th, and in the following day's paper the explanation may be found, in the shape of a letter from Mr Storer to Mr Thomson, dated from Dublin, October 15th, 1750, which runs as follows :—

“Sir,—I had the favour of both your obliging letters, but the pleasure I received from the contents of them, was very soon soured by the unlucky and most mortifying accident that possibly could have happened. Mrs Lampe has kept her bed these sixteen days in a high fever, one day given over, the next the greatest hopes of recovery, and so alternately for above a fortnight past.

“As to setting out before her, the very thoughts of being left alone would absolutely kill her ; nor could the entertainments be the least forwarded without Mr Lampe. We are doing all we can in this situation, we have engaged a man singer, he is an agreeable figure, and (except low) has a better voice than any man on the stage, Mr Lampe has a high opinion of his capacity ; he is already perfect in the *Moor of Moor-Hall* ;* and sings the songs with great spirit. I have secured all the musick of *Romeo and Juliet* ; *Merchant of Venice* ; *Tempest*, &c., and have only this to say, that, as we are out of all manner of business, our inclination and interest both join to make us set out with the utmost expedition.—I am, Sir, your most obedient, &c.

CHARLES STORER.”

Beneath this letter is a paragraph putting off the opening indefinitely until the arrival of Mrs Storer, Mr Lampe, &c.

* Dragon of Wantley.

In the *Caledonian Mercury* of November 6th is an intimation that “Last night Mrs Storer, the celebrated singer, arrived here from Dublin, and is to perform to-morrow night at the New Concert Hall.” On the 23rd Mrs Storer appeared as Phillida, in the ballad opera of *Damon and Phillida*; while on the same evening *The Fair Penitent* was given with the following cast:—Horatio = Davies; Lothario = Kennedy; Lavinia = Mrs Robertson; and Callista = Mrs Davies, being the first time of her appearance on the stage.

On November 28th, Davies played Hamlet, the other parts as follows:—Ghost = Kennedy; King = Hinde; Polonius = Berry; Laertes = Storer; Horatio = Davenport; Guildenstern = Waldegrave; Gravediggers = Robertson and Berry; Queen = Mrs Hinde; Ophelia = Mrs Storer.

Tickets to be had, among other places, at Salmon’s Coffee House in the area of the Concert Hall. Annual Tickets at John’s Coffee House.

Thomson and Davie, or Davies, who was no other than the future biographer of Garrick, had shown great spirit in the engagement of their company. Besides Mrs Storer as vocalist and light lead, Mrs Kennedy (also from Dublin) was celebrated both as an actress and vocalist. Lampe as a composer is too well-known to require more than mention here; the history of his connection with Edinburgh, however, has not hitherto been written, and his wife, formerly Miss Young, the sister of Mrs Arne, was a singer. The company, in fact, seems to have been good all round, perhaps too good, inasmuch as the salaries were too great for a hard-up community such as that of Edinburgh to support.

Mrs Kennedy made her first appearance in Edinburgh as Rose in the *Recruiting Officer*, November 30th. The other parts being filled as follows:—Captain Hume = Kennedy; Justice Ballance = Thomson; Worthy = Davenport; Bullock = Berry; Kite = Hinde; Recruits = Robertson and Berry; Captain Brazen = Storer; Melinda = Mrs Hinde; Lucy = Mrs Berry; and Sylvia = Mrs Robertson.

On December 3rd, Davies played Othello to Iago by Kennedy, and Desdemona, by Mrs Davies.

December 7th, *Jane Shore*, with Mrs Hamilton in the title-rôle, with a pantomime entertainment, called *Merlin*, or *The British Enchanter*.

On December 12th, *The Devil to Pay*, the part of Sir John Loverule by Mr Corry, being his first appearance in Edinburgh, in which character will be introduced the Early Horn. On the 14th, Davies appeared as

Richard III. for the first time, and the play was repeated on the 21st, with Ricard as Richard, and Hopkins as Henry VI., being the first time of their appearing on any stage.

The *Beggars' Opera* was given on the 28th as follows:—Captain Macheath = Corry ; Peachum = Storer ; Filch = Roberston ; Polly = Mrs Storer ; and Lucy = Mrs Lampe.

This company continued appearing during the early months of 1751, although it is to be regretted that no records of what they did can be found.

On April 23rd, 1751, the *Gentle Shepherd* was given by a company of gentlemen for the benefit of a family in distress. This was repeated in May, but from that date until June 11th, 1752, there is no clue as to what was going on. On the latter date, Mr Simson, from Drury Lane, played Hamlet. And on the 22nd of the same month Mrs Hamilton was given a benefit by some young gentlemen, who were announced to do so “not so much for their own diversion as to help her in her present unhappy circumstances, having been left some time ago behind by the company, sick, and having part of her family to leave behind her should she follow them ; therefore she humbly hopes this reason will plead her excuse in giving the town a second trouble.”

CHAPTER V.

LEE'S MANAGEMENT—1752-1756.



IN the summer of 1752, Mr John Lee, late of Drury Lane, came to Edinburgh with the intention of purchasing, and settling down as manager of the Canongate Playhouse. According to his own account* he had been requested to do this, and had been promised the patronage and friendship of a number of gentlemen of influence, among whom were Lord Elibank and the Honble. Andrew Pringle of Alemoor. The theatre up to this period had been very badly managed, and had fallen into a state of decay, out of which all lovers of the Drama were anxious to see it raised. Results soon showed that the choice of Lee was a good one, for in addition to being an excellent actor, he possessed energy, tact, and administrative ability. In the mean time, however, some difficulty arose as to the price to be paid for the theatre property ; and this being referred to arbitration, on March 7th, 1753, the arbiters (Sir Gilbert and Mr Lockhart) fixed upon the following amount for lease, scenes, &c. :—

£200 which Lee had paid down.				
£100 with interest, payable at Whitsuntide 1753.				
£200	„	„	„	1754.
£145	„	„	„	1755.
<hr/>				
£645 Total.†				

This purchase was made from a Mr Thomas Robertson, who was factor for the then proprietors. Lord Elibank and his friends, who had been the principal movers in getting the theatre on such easy terms for Lee, do not seem to have been satisfied that they had done enough for their protegee. Very soon after they got up a subscription, with which to buy Lee an annuity of £100 for five years, on condition that he resided in Edinburgh

* Address published 1767, and pamphlet, "A Narrative of a Remarkable Breach of Trust, &c., 1772."

† Both Arnot and Jackson give utterly wrong versions of the amount to be paid.

as manager and actor. Lord Elibank likewise promised to try and get a patent so soon as the theatre rose sufficiently in the public estimation.

So far, Lee had every reason to be satisfied, even flattered, by his reception at the hands of the chief patrons of the Drama in Edinburgh, and his career promised to be prosperous.

His original inducement in leaving London to seek his fortune in the north, however, had originated in a quarrel with Garrick. Lee seems to have started his theatrical life at Goodman's Fields Theatre ; where during 1745-6 he played such parts as Sir Charles Freeman, in the *Stratagem*, Ghost, in *Hamlet*, Hotspur, in *Henry IV.*, &c. During the following season, at the same house, he played Carlos, in the *Revenge*, Richard III., Cassio, in *Othello*, and for his own benefit, Hamlet. For the next season (1747-8) Garrick engaged him for Drury Lane, where he would appear* to have acted for the first time on November 14th, as the Bastard in *King Lear*. During this season he acted Myrtle, in *Conscious Lovers*, Mountjoy, in *Henry V.*, Ferdinand, in Garrick's revival of Dryden's alteration of the *Tempest*, Belmour, in *Jane Shore*, Rosse, in *Macbeth*, and, at his joint benefit with Matthews (April 14th), Col. Standard, in the *Constant Couple*. Throughout the next season, 1748-9, his round of parts remained much the same. This probably dissatisfied Lee and induced him to seek the rupture that followed. At any rate, on the 23rd October 1749, he appeared at Covent Garden as Ranger in the *Suspicious Husband*. Although still under his engagement to Garrick, he had broken his articles and gone over to the other house, where he remained during the season, playing among other parts, Axalla, in *Tamerlane*, Dauphine, in *Henry V.*, Campley, in the *Funeral*, and on March 1st (1750) Romeo to Miss Bellamy's Juliet. He appeared at Quin's benefit as Alexas, in *All for Love*, and at Miss Bellamy's, as Lothario in the *Fair Penitent*. For his own benefit he acted Richard III. Lee found that Garrick was not a man to be imposed upon, and at the commencement of the season 1750-51 was compelled to return to Drury Lane, where he reappeared as George Barnwell on 27th December, but his name does not appear very often during the season. For his benefit he acted Hamlet. In 1751-2 he was still at Drury Lane, and played for his benefit the part of King Lear to the Cordelia of Mrs Ward.† His articles being then out, he determined to turn his face towards the North, and, as related above, arrived in Edinburgh safely.

* It is the first mention of his name at Drury Lane by Genest.

† Genest, vol. iv.

According to the compiler of the "Thespian Dictionary," (1802), Lee's pretensions to ability as an actor were more than balanced by his vanity. He had a good person and voice, and more than ordinary knowledge in his profession. Where he failed was in aping the position and importance of Garrick. "He was for ever," as Foote said, "doing the honours of his face; he affected uncommon long pauses, and frequently took such out-of-the way pains with *emphasis* and *articulation*, that the natural actor seldom appeared." His temper became so bad as to banish him from every theatre in the course of time. He was unquestionably unpopular among the members of the profession, and to this may be traced, no doubt, the origin of many very unfavourable criticisms which he received.

Lee himself says,* that in order to get actors to come to Edinburgh from London he had to offer salaries for the entire year; otherwise there would have been no inducement for them coming so far north. As, however, the Edinburgh season only lasted a few months, he had to transplant his company, when not employed at head-quarters, to Glasgow, Newcastle, Scarborough, and other towns. This system only commenced after his first season, during which he seems to have contented himself with employing what talent he found in Edinburgh upon his arrival. One of the first things he did was to commence reforming the many abuses that existed in the economy of stage management; and to Lee is due the distinction of having been the first to raise the status and *morale* of the theatre in Edinburgh. We find him strenuously setting his face against part of the audience (save on special occasions) occupying seats on the stage, and he endeavoured with great success to stop the practice of "gentlemen" being admitted behind the scenes. So anxious was he to stop this that he partly caused his own ruin, by going to the expense of altering the box entrance, which till then (1754) had lain across the stage. Besides making great improvements in the scenery and decorations of the theatre, he tried many experiments, one of which turned out rather unexpectedly. To improve the stage thunder, he procured a parcel of nine pound shot, which were put into a wheel-barrow. This was run up and down by a carpenter across a number of ridges nailed upon the back of the stage. One evening, the play being *Lear*, the new thunder was put into requisition, and for some time proved effective. But at length, as the King was braving the pelting

* See pamphlet, "A Narrative," &c., 1772.

of the pitiless storm, the thunder-god's foot slipped, and down he came, barrow, shot, and all. The balls running down the declivity of the stage knocked the scene on top of poor Lear, and continued their career into the orchestra, putting to flight the musicians and totally destroying the bass fiddle ; while, to crown the whole, the sprawling thunderer lay prostrate in sight of the audience, like another Salmoneus, and Lear having emerged from the wrecked scene was skipping about like a man dancing the egg hornpipe.

Regarding Lee's first season, little took place that calls for any mention. Or, perhaps, it would be correct to say that little can be discovered as to what did take place. Nothing could shed any light on the subject, save it were a set of the playbills ; but the most careful research has resulted in tracing only one or two specimens of these ; while the newspapers are almost silent regarding what went on at the "Concert Hall" at this period.

On July 2nd, 1752, for the benefit of Mr Simson, *The Orphan*. Castalio by Mr Simson ; Alcasto = Mr Thomson ; Polydore = Mr Corry ; Chamont = Mr Davenport ; Chaplain = Mr Salmon ; The Page = Master Simson ; Serina = Mrs Davenport ; Florella = Mrs Salmon ; Monimia = Mrs Hamilton.* July 7th, the *Gentle Shepherd* was given by a Company of Gentlemen for their diversion, for the benefit of a family in distress. Lee does not seem to have had anything to do with these performances. When his first season commenced is not certain. The *Beggars' Opera*, on November 24th, is the first advertised performance. Mr Corry played Macheath ; Mrs Hamilton, Lucy ; Mrs Storer, Polly ; the music was conducted by Signor Pasquali, who played a Grand Concerto between the acts.

The 'Taylors' Hall was running in opposition. On December 5th was given a new Pantomime Entertainment, *Harlequin Gardener*, in which Mr Stewart exhibited some surprising feats on the slack wire in full swing ! (Pit 2s., Gallery 1s.)

Some time in December, *Romeo and Juliet* was brought out at the Concert Hall. Probably this was the version mentioned in the "Biographia Dramatica," as having been altered by Lee for the Edinburgh Stage, and described therein as one of his four "Literary Murders."

The *Courant* of Tuesday, January 30th, 1753, is "assured that the new whimsical Farce called the *Enraged Musician*, or *The Tempest Rehearsed*,

* *Courant*, 25th June.

lately wrote by Signor Pasquali, will be performed at the Concert Hall on Friday next, and we have also heard that he has taken the hint from that famous print called the 'Enraged Musician,' done by Mr Hogarth, and that Signor Pasquali will play the Enraged Musician himself, this being the first time of his attempting to speak on any stage."

No more information is to hand regarding this season, and of the following we learn nothing until February 12th (1754), on which date the *Courant* prints the following ;—" We hear that the comedy of *Much Ado About Nothing* (written by Shakespere) was received at the theatre last night with universal applause, and are desired to acquaint the public that printed copies as it is altered to the stage are to be had of Mr Yare, bookseller, in the Parliament Close." It is possible that Lee adapted *Much Ado* in the same way as he had done *Romeo and Juliet*.

" At the New Concert Hall in the Canongate, next week will be presented gratis a new Tragedy never acted before, called *Herminius and Espasia*, (written by a Scots Gentleman), characters by Mr Lee, Mr Griffith, Mr Wright, Mr Love, Mr Torrington, Mrs Lee, Mrs Price, and Mrs Danvers."* It was produced on February 25th.

Mr Griffith, mentioned here, was new to the company this season. Where he came from, however, it is difficult to say. He may have been the son of the actor of that name, who, in 1731, was in Dublin, and evidently doing well. This elder Griffith, in addition to his professional duties, was the secretary to the Grand Lodge of Ireland. The younger Griffiths was long connected with the Edinburgh stage.

On the 28th February, *Herminius and Espasia* was repeated, and a concert in the Assembly Hall given by a Mr Macpherson, upon the same evening, was advertised to begin at " half-an-hour after five o'clock and conclude soon enough to afford the company an opportunity of going to the play, which on this occasion is to open exactly at half-an-hour after 7 and end about 10."†

Mrs Lee took her benefit on Monday, March 4th, the piece being the *Suspicious Husband*, with the farce, *Miss in her Teens*, copies of which (new edition) were sold at the pit door, price 4d. Nothing under full price was taken (Boxes and Pit 2s. 6d., Gallery 1s. 6d.) and apparently there was a very full house, as an *Amphitheatre* had to be erected upon the stage to accommodate the audience.

* *Courant*, February 12th 1754.

† *Ibid.*

March 9th, Griffith's benefit, when Lee performed Young Bevil in the *Conscious Lovers* for the first time.

March 20th, Mrs Price acted Polly in the *Beggars' Opera*, also for the first time.

"By desire of several ladies of quality, for the benefit of Mrs and Miss Hamilton, March 22nd, *The Rehearsal*. Bays = Love, with *Hob in the Well*, and singing by Mr Sheriff and Miss Hamilton."

For Monday, 15th April, the *Merchant of Venice*, "newly alter'd from Shakespear and Lord Landsdown, and adapted for the stage," was advertised,* with the special stipulation, "that gentlemen passing over the stage are not to make continuance behind the scenes, as the new painted scenes are scarce dry"! Mr Lee played Shylock and Mrs Lee, Portia; both being their first appearances in those parts.

Lee spent the summer in travelling with his company, with the result, as he himself tells us, that he lost £500. His third instalment of the purchase money for the theatre was due in May 1754; but on December 1st it had not been paid. Some tradesmen seized upon part of his goods for debt, to relieve which state of matters he applied to Lord Elibank. That gentleman assured Lee that he himself and some friends would become security upon an *assignment* of the theatre. Lee inquired if this could not be done *in trust*, to which his Lordship replied in the negative. The result of this was that a proper deed of assignment of the theatre and its properties was drawn out and signed by Lee on December 27th. Its ostensible object was to prevent tradesmen, who had debts against Lee, from seizing the theatrical property—such as furniture, scenes, &c., "for," Lord Elibank said to Lee, "although they would badger you if the theatre was your property, they will be frightened to do so when it belongs to us." Lee was obliged to accept this explanation of Elibank's actions and intentions; although his heart seems to have misgiven him as to the "friendliness" of the transaction. To complete the farce of the whole thing, Lord Elibank's factor took an inventory and formal instrument of possession, and in February 1755, gave Lee a paper empowering him "to continue as manager," but expressly declaring that the "gentlemen" were not to be liable for any debts Lee might contract.

The "gentlemen" mentioned above were by name as follows:—
Rt. Hon. Patrick Lord Elibank.

* *Courant*.

The Hon. Andrew Pringle of Alemoor, Senator of the Col. of Justice, &c.
 Hon. Thomas Miller of Barskimming, Lord Justice Clerk, &c.
 Hon. George Brown of Coalston, Senator of the College of Justice,
 Lord of the High Court, &c.

Hon. James Burnet of Montboddo, „ „
 Hon. James Veitch of Elliock, „ „
 Patrick Home, Esq., Advocate, and Director of the Royal Bank.
 David Ross, Esq., Advocate, &c.
 David Stuart Moncrieffe, Esq., Advocate, &c.
 Hon. David Kennedy, Esq., Advocate.
 Sir John Dalrymple, Bart., Advocate.
 George Morison, Esq., Advocate.
 William Alston, W.S., &c.
 Alexander Maxwell, Wine Merchant, Edinburgh.
 James Calender, Shopkeeper in the same city ; with
 John Lee, Proprietor of the Old Theatre there. *

Lee never received any back bond, but, in March 1755, Mr Burnett, agent for the gentlemen, granted a missive letter in these terms,—

“Sir,—Whereas, by a deed bearing date the 27th day of December last, you have disposed to me, and certain other gentlemen therein named, your Tack of the new Concert Hall in the Canongate, with the scenes, &c., according to an inventory signed by you, and by the same deed you acknowledge the Receipt of the Price being £500, this is to declare that notwithstanding such acknowledgment, there is truly paid by us but £316 by a bond we granted for that sum to Moubray & Clapperton, Tradesmen in Edinburgh ; and that the remainder of the £500 is still in our hands ready to be made forthcoming to you.”

While this was going on behind the scenes, the season (1754-5) opened in due course towards the end of December. The first piece advertised was the *Suspicious Husband*, and the following announcement made its appearance :—“As boxes were last winter frequently taken by ladies, who only fill'd the front rows thereof, yet (by nominally pre-engaging the whole) excluded others from coming to the play 'tis proposed this season to follow the regulation of the London Theatres, viz.—for servants at the time of engaging them either to show or take as many tickets as they would keep places for, which method alone can furnish an opportunity of accommodating each company and secure the seats being kept without confusion ; and as the boxes are so altered as not to have the necessity of passing over the stage to them, no gentleman can possibly be admitted

* Narrative, 1772.

behind the scenes." * A few days after, the public were informed that Mr Salmon (who was the box-keeper, and lived in the area below the theatre) would grant tickets "marked with the date of the day and description of the places taken on sight, whereof every gentleman or lady must be satisfied of the seats being secure without the least confusion." † The alterations mentioned above as having been made in the boxes, no doubt cost a good deal of money, and very probably helped materially to run Lee into debt.

The company this season was much the same as last. Love had gone to Dublin, to make one of Victor and Sowdon's Company. In exchange, Edinburgh received Kennedy from Dublin, although Mrs Kennedy remained in the latter city along with their daughter. The following account is from Lee Lewis :—‡

"Mrs Kennedy remained in Dublin, to give her husband intelligence of the new direction § and was, soon after the departure of Mr Sheridan, engaged on a salary of four pounds per week. Her husband was then playing with Mr Garrick's counterpart, Mr John Lee, at Edinburgh. Conjugal love and paternal affection, with almost a certainty of a very good engagement, powerfully stimulated him to return home to his wife and family. He arrived in Dublin in 1755, after about a year's absence. Mrs Kennedy was re-engaged at her former salary; but without being able to obtain any provision for her husband. She expostulated with the managers on the cruelty of separating man and wife, and did not fail to remind them, that in Sheridan's management, her husband had, for the last three years, three pounds a week. They would not give any such salary; but, to oblige her, they offered to allow him thirty shillings a week, which, they said, was as much as they could possibly afford him.

"Mrs Kennedy, thus repulsed, went home and acquainted her husband of what had happened, who, being rather warm in his temper, resolved that nothing but one or both of the offenders' lives should appease his wrath, or satisfy his wounded honour. Thus determined, he issued forth, borrowed a case of pistols, and instantly went to the lodgings of Sowdon."

Sowdon craftily laid the blame on Victor, to whom Kennedy next went, to find, however, that that worthy equally denied it. The warlike Kennedy, with a pistol in each hand, then insisted that Sowdon should be sent for, and when the two managers were brought face to face, and could no longer lay the blame on each other—there was no help for it but to grant Kennedy the salary he desired, namely, three pounds per week.

* *Courant*.

† It is worthy of note, too, that nothing but full price was taken throughout the season.

‡ *Memoirs*, vol. ii. p. 58.

§ Victor and Sowdon, who had hired the Theatre from Sheridan.

Such was the gentleman that Lee added to his company for the season under consideration.

Another and very important addition to the company this season was Lancashire, the low comedian. It does not appear that he ever received any stage training; and his stage career, which was a pretty long one, was confined to Edinburgh. Jackson says of him,* "Mr Lancashire possessed a great fund of dry humour, and filled Shuter's line in low comedy. He was a great favourite with the public. He kept a tavern first in the Canongate and afterwards in the new town. He drank and joked with his customers; laughed and grew fat; and at length died, respected by many, and with the good word of all."

This worthy member some years afterwards was nicknamed "Sir Cape," from the fact that he was first "sovereign" of the Cape Club which met in his tavern. There is no doubt that for many years his was a well known presence among the literary and jovial spirits of the day; he was the friend of Ferguson the poet, who wrote the following epitaph upon him—

"Alas, poor Tom, how oft, with merry heart,
Have we beheld thee play the sexton's part!
Each merry heart must now be grieved to see
The sexton's dreary part performed on thee."

January 1st 1755.—*The Constant Couple*. Sir Harry = Griffith; Colonel Standard = Lee; Clincher senior = Kennedy; Lady Lurewell = Mrs Lee. January 4th, *Richard III.* = Lee; Anne = Mrs Lee; Queen Elizabeth = Mrs Price. January 6th.—*Romeo and Juliet*. January 8th.—*Much Ado*, with grand masquerade scene. January 13th.—*King Lear*. January 15th.—*Recruiting Officer*. Captain Plume = Mr Lee; Sylvia = Mrs Price; with *Duke and no Duke*, first time here; Trampolin = Stamper. January 22nd.—*Busy Body*. Marplot = Griffith; Sir George Airy = Kennedy; Sir Francis Gripe = Stamper; Charles = Torrington; Sir Jealous Traffick = Wright; Miranda = Mrs Lee. February 24th.—*As you like it*. Touchstone = Lee; Jacques = Wright; Orlando = Griffith; Corin = Stamper; Amiens (with songs) = Adams; Celia = Miss Hamilton; Rosalind = Mrs Price.

The above casts are taken pretty well at random from the numerous advertisements that appear this season in the *Courant*. They are much fuller and more regular than had ever appeared before.

* History of Scottish Stage, p. 42.

March 3rd.—For Mrs Lee's benefit, *Provoked Husband*, when an amphitheatre was erected on the stage, and servants allowed to keep places.

March 10th.—Benefit of Mrs Price.—*Macbeth*. Speaking and singing witches by Stamper, Keasberry, Salmon, Lancashire, Mrs Hamilton, Mrs Wright, Miss Hamilton, Miss Wells, &c. Lady Macbeth = Mrs Price. The above is the first mention to be found of Lancashire's name. It was probably his first appearance.

There was a short summer season, and the winter campaign opened on November 25th (1755), with the *Stratagem*; Archer = Lee; Mrs Sullen = Mrs Ward; and the *School of Anacreon*, with Mr Wilder in the cast. This gentleman seems to have been a good actor, and always a favourite with his managers; his chief character was Colonel Oldboy in *Lionel and Clarissa*.*

An interesting announcement appeared early in the season, as follows:—"If there be any neglect in furnishing ladies or gentlemen with bills of the Concert, their giving immediate intelligence to Mr Lee, in order to have it remedied, will be esteemed a particular favour."

December 2nd.—*Beggars' Opera*. Macheath = Wilder; Polly = Miss Hamilton.

January 3rd, 1756.—*King Lear*. King Lear = Lee; Edgar = Fletcher; Cordelia = Mrs Barclay (her first appearance here). January 21st.—*Fair Penitent*. Horatio = Heyman; Sciolto = Keasberry; Altamont = Torrington; Rossano = Paterson; Lothario = Lee; Lavinia = Mrs Barclay; Caliola = Mrs Ward.

On February 23rd, some disagreement sprang up between Lee and the "gentlemen" who had befriended him, with the result that while Lee was on the stage they took possession of the property, along with the money drawn at the doors. Events that followed show pretty conclusively that these "gentlemen" had contemplated taking this action, for some time before they had written and engaged West Digges to be their stage director and principal actor. Lee, with all the moral right on his side, but without a legal peg to hang his case upon, set about exposing the whole business; but the "gentlemen" had foreseen what he would do, and had him promptly arrested at the suit of Burnet, the play-house tailor. On February 26th, his furniture was sold off and his

* Thespian Dictionary.

children turned out into the street. Four days afterwards Digges arrived in Edinburgh. Lee says :—" In this melancholy situation I had leisure to look back awhile ; and to reflect that within the space of a few hours, I was, by an unparalleled act of fraud and barbarity, thrown from the possession of a considerable property, with an income of £600 a year, into a loathsome gaol ; with about £8 in my pocket ; two children destitute in Edinburgh, and my wife (unable to form a true idea of this oppression) with two more waiting in London for supplies from me, nay, with an absolute certainty, all the time, that my effects exceeded by many hundreds of pounds, every debt I owed."

He lay two months in jail, which greatly hurt his health, but was liberated by those who had instigated his arrest, when they thought he had been sufficiently taught not to seek to measure swords with them.

In July, however, Lee entered an action for the restitution of the theatre—and the same day was re-arrested at the suit of a stone-mason. He was again liberated the following morning, but would have been prevented from appearing at the case he had instituted, which was to come on upon July 21st, by still another arrestment, had not the Sheriff-Substitute, James Balfour of Pilrig, refused the warrant. The judgment was given of no-process ; so Lee circulated a handbill, the contents of which the newspapers had refused to insert as an advertisement :—" As the cause between Mr Lee, Proprietor of the Theatre, plaintiff, and the Rt. Hon. Lord Elibank, Andrew Pringle, Esq., Mr John Dalrymple, &c., defendants, is *put off* till the ensuing season ; Mr Lee begs the favour of his creditors to meet him at John's Coffee House to-morrow at 4 o'clock in the afternoon, in order to place his affairs in such a posture as may conduce to their mutual interests."

The effects of this disgraceful affair were long felt in the law courts. In 1763 John Bruce, playhouse painter (in 1755) sued Beatt, manager for the "gentlemen," for a debt of £27, 8s. The Sheriff-Substitute and his principal both decreed the debt with interest and expenses. The Outer House annulled that decree, but in 1766 Bruce eventually won his case in the Inner House. *

When Lee saw there was no good in remaining any longer in Edinburgh, he crossed over to Dublin, where he received an offer from Sheridan, who had unsuccessfully tried to engage Barry to come to Dublin. Sheri-

* Lee's Narrative, 1772.

dan had never seen Lee act, but offered him £400 for the season. It seems, however, he did not answer Sheridan's expectations.* Mr Wilder followed Lee to Dublin, and made a great hit as Macheath, his wife playing Polly.

To resume the thread of our History, the "gentlemen" had not been forgetful that Mr Lee's place, both as actor and manager, had to be filled. In the latter capacity a Mr Callender was engaged by them. Mr Callender had no qualification in particular for the post. He had been a merchant, and seems, although he was not successful as a manager, to have had a certain amount of address and business knowledge. His position, however, resolved itself very soon into what, now-a-days, would be called an "assistant acting manager's" place. All the business of the stage, the engaging of players (to a certain extent), the advertising, and other important duties were performed by West Digges. Digges was an actor whose career, even in an age when romance might be said to be part and parcel of an actor's life, must be regarded as exceptionally romantic.

It has generally been considered that he was a natural son of the Hon. Elizabeth West, who, in 1724, married Thomas Digges, Esq., of Chilham Castle, Kent. But there are no grounds for supposing that Digges was born out of wedlock. The report very likely arose from his mother's relations not wishing to be connected with an actor.

In appearance Digges was both dignified and handsome; his eye was full of animation, and his features were well adapted for the stage. In addition to these advantages he had an engaging manner and address, which, no doubt,—along with a carelessness in money matters—conspired as much to ruin him as it did to make him popular. Victor the historian, who knew him well, says:—"In Mr Digges almost all the requisites to form a great actor seemed to unite; every advantage of art and nature, except an harmonious voice." Genest says:—† "Digges' family connexions (he had been at one time presumptive heir to an earldom) and the many singular circumstances which marked his entrance into life, were so well known, that his first appearance engaged the attention of the politest circles. His address was easy and engaging—his manners refined and polished—he had received a liberal education—and few men ever sacrificed more to the graces—no man was ever a

* Genest, vol. x. p. 408.

† Vol. x. 366.

greater favourite with the fair, or a more pleasing companion among his own sex."

His first appearance on the stage was in Dublin on November 27th 1749. *Venice Preserved*. Pierre = Sheridan; Renault = Cibber, junr.; Belvidera = Miss Danvers; and the part of Jaffier by Mr Digges, a "gentleman lately arrived from England, who never yet appeared on any stage." Hitchcock says:—"He supported his character with feeling, tenderness and variety, beyond expectation—but he had a harshness in his voice, which time afterwards considerably abated." That was at Dublin, where Digges continued all the season, playing such parts as Antony, *Julius Cæsar*; Castalio, *The Orphan*; Hastings, *Jane Shore*; &c. Remaining in Dublin he played, besides a host of others, the parts of Pyrrhus, *Distressed Mother*; Myrtle, *Conscious Lovers*; Scandal, *Love for Love*; and Macheath.* He remained in Dublin till the close of the season 1752-3, when it would appear he was obliged to quit Ireland, on account of the many debts he had contracted. For some time previously he had been living with Mrs Ward, who was a member of the Dublin Company in 1752-3. When he came to England he took up his residence at Feltham, whence he despatched many letters to his lady friend at Dublin, where she had remained,—with the object, no doubt, of making a settlement with Digges' creditors. Some time in September this seems to have been accomplished, partly with some money Digges had raised and sent over to Ireland in Sowdon's custody. Digges then returned, and acted throughout the season 1753-4, during which occurred the memorable disturbance that compelled Sheridan to leave Ireland for some years.† Debts cropping up again, Digges removed to London and stayed in St James' Sanctuary along with Bland. During 1754-5 he was probably hiding; but it is likely he returned to Dublin, although not to act, some time previous to being engaged for Edinburgh, where, as we have already seen, he arrived in the beginning of March 1756.

Owing to the absurd custom which then prevailed, of describing newly come actors as "gentlemen" from so and so, it is impossible to fix Digges' first appearance in the Canongate Playhouse. On March 6th, Lord Townly was played by a "gentleman from the Theatre Royal in Dublin, being his second appearance on this stage." This probably refers to Digges. Again, on March 29th, *Henry VIII.* Cardinal Wolsey,

* Genest.

† In which Digges played a very prominent part.

by a gentleman, &c., same as above. This is almost certain to have been Digges. Wolsey was one of his best parts, and in selecting it had rightly calculated on making a hit, for it was repeated several times before the season closed. The only other performance worth noting was on April 24th, when, "by particular desire of the Masters and Brethren of the Ancient and Honourable Society of Freemasons," Mr Paterson took his benefit. The *Fatal Marriage* was the piece, the prologue "to be spoke by a brother mason properly clothed, epilogue by Mrs Ward, and several mason songs between the Acts, and a grand chorus by the brethren."

The summer season was as usual held during the race week, the following being the programme :—

"Concert Hall in the Canongate. Will be presented gratis (after the several Concerts), the following Dramatic performances :—

"Monday, 27th September.—*The Rehearsal*, Bayes = Mr Love (first appearance here for 2 years). Tuesday, 28th, *Romeo and Juliet*. Suitable preparations are making for this performance. A solemn dirge, with a superb funeral procession of Juliet attended by the different orders of Monks and Friars in the Roman Church to the Monument of the Capulets, will be exhibited in it. All the decorations will be entirely new." "The part of *Romeo*, by Mr Digges' (being his first appearance here in that character)." This, it is worthy of note, was the first time his name had been announced. Friar = Mr Love ; Mercutio = Stamper ; Juliet = Mrs Ward. "Wednesday, 29th.—No performance, on account of there being a charity assembly. Thursday, 30th.—*Henry VI*. Hotspur = Mr Digges (first appearance in the part) ; Falstaff = Mr Love ; Lady Piercy = Mrs Ward. Friday, October 1st.—*Beggars' Opera*. Macheath = Digges. October 2nd.—*Henry VIII*." Truly a curious list of attractions for a race week, if judged by present day tastes !

Mr Digges advertised at this time that "letters from the country," directed to him as "manager of the Theatre in the Canongate, would be punctually and carefully obey'd," showing that Mr Callender had been already relegated to the post of second in command.

The season 1756-7 was ushered in by a performance of the *Gentle Shepherd*, by a "company of young gentlemen." This was on the 23rd November, in the Taylors' Hall, Cowgate, where occasional performances were still given from time to time. In the advertisement of this performance, it was specially announced that, "as the Hall was out of repair, the same is now repaired at a great deal of expense to the pro-

prietor, so that ladies and gentlemen will be well accomodated." This reads as if the "Taylors' Hall" was to be often used for scratch productions ; but, whether it was so or not, there is no evidence. The first play announced at the Theatre, towards the end of November, was *The Revenge*, by Dr Young; and almost immediately on the back of that was produced a play that was destined to fill an almost unique place in the history of the Drama, and the importance of which demands a full and careful narration.

CHAPTER VI.

DOUGLAS.



IN the *Evening Courant* of Saturday, December 4th, 1756, there is the following announcement:—"A *New Tragedy* called DOUGLAS, written by an ingenious gentleman of this country, is now in rehearsal at the Theatre, and will be performed as speedily as possible. The expectations of the public from the performance are in proportion to the known talent and ability of the Author, whose modest merit would have suppressed a Dramatic work, which we think by the concurrent testimony of many gentlemen of taste and literature will be an honour to this country." And on the 9th December there is a brief notice that the "New Tragedy of DOUGLAS will be performed on Tuesday 14th." Such was the scanty information afforded the public through the medium of the public press* of this remarkable production of John Home's Tragedy of *Douglas*. It is very evident, however, that a more extensive publication of the event was unnecessary. Mr Digges knew excellently well the business of advertising, and while, during the same month, he inserted long announcements in the newspapers of other performances, he contented himself with publishing merely the shortest notices respecting *Douglas*. He counted, and rightly, on drawing good houses from the circles of polite society, in which the author was a great favourite; and these, after all, were the chief supporters of the theatre. But the production had an importance and produced results that at the time were not even dreamt of. In reading through the scattered accounts that remain one is apt, for one thing, to pause in amazement at the illiberal feeling and bigotry of the worst type that was displayed by the clergy. Home, the author, as is well known, was the minister of Athelstaneford, and when it became known that he, a minister

* The *Caledonian Mercury* contains identical information, word for word.

of the Kirk, had not only written a tragedy, but had actually trafficked with the players for its production in the "accursed" theatre in the Canongate, the more bigoted of the clergy lost all patience and all self-control. Of charitableness it is questionable if they ever had any to lose. Denunciations, admonitions, and fulminations came thick, and the righteous indignation of the Presbytery descended not only on the devoted head of the author of the play, but on several luckless ministers who had been foolhardy enough to see *Douglas* acted. One clergyman, the Rev. Thomas Whyte of Liberton, was suspended for six weeks; a mitigated sentence, be it noted, which he owed to the plea that, though present at a performance in the theatre, he concealed himself as well as he could to avoid giving offence! An "Act and Exhortation" was read from the pulpit, and the Glasgow presbytery, anxious not to be outdone in exhibition of zeal—although obviously without motive, there being no theatre in Glasgow—patched up a lamentation over the "melancholy fact, that there should be a tragedy written by a minister of the Church of Scotland!"

Poor Home dreaded facing the tribunal of his clerical brethren, and in the mean time betook himself to London, where he succeeded in getting Mr Rich of Covent Garden to produce his play. This further enraged his enemies at home; and although, through the friendly offices of the Rev. Edward Stedman, minister of Haddington, he had the advantage of proceedings on the part of the presbytery being postponed for a considerable time, he eventually, rather than face the charge to be brought against him, thought it best to tender his resignation.* Dr Carlyle was another of the victims pounced upon. He was, however, of too strong-minded a disposition to be easily put down, and as he was fully convinced in his own mind of the rectitude of his actions, defended himself with skill and success. The General Assembly in fact, by 117 votes against 39, declared him free from all censure. Meanwhile the zeal of the clergy in many respects defeated its own object, and really served in a marked way as a capital advertisement; for there is little doubt that the interest in the drama among tradesmen and mechanics, which was first awakened by performances of the *Gentle Shepherd* on various occasions, was enormously increased by the production of *Douglas*, and the bitter opposition it received from the hands of the clergy.

Of the Tragedy itself it is scarcely necessary to say much. That it

* The often made assertion, that he was ignominiously expelled from the Kirk, is utterly without foundation.

became greatly popular, both here and in London, and continued so for many years, cannot be wondered at. It was an age when high sounding bombast did yeoman's service in place of genuine work. Not that the piece is devoid of merit. Indeed, for the work of a man who could have had no practical knowledge of the stage and the requisites of dramatic writing, it is astonishing, as exhibiting some remarkably effective work. Of portrayal of character there is scarcely a trace. The characters one and all, through all the five acts, never once descend from their exalted pedestal of pedantical blank verse ; if there is an exception, it is to be found in the part of Old Norval, who certainly shows a few signs of being mortal, and not a stuffed mummy of the author's imagination. The play has been quite dead for many years ; but it is, perhaps, worthy of perusal if only to see what stuff went down with our forefathers for work of genius. As already said, however, its original production was a memorable event in the History of the Scottish Stage. Original productions of new plays in the provinces were as scarce then as now ; besides, the fact of its being written by a Scotsman lent an additional attraction. Scotsmen were then very "clannish." A story peculiarly illustrative of this and of the impression made on his countrymen by Home exists in tradition. At the first performance of *Douglas*, when Young Norval was busily employed giving out one of his rodomontading speeches, a canny Scot, who had been observed to grow more and more excited as the piece progressed, unable longer to contain his feelings, called out with evident pride, "Whaur's yer Wully Shakspeare noo !" This humble admirer of the play and its author was, however, by no means alone in thinking so highly of the piece. Men well able to judge went the length of saying that it was the "best play written since Shakspeare." Mr David Hume, the philosopher, who was an intimate friend of Home's, praised it in the highest terms, and Mr Henry Mackenzie, also a friend of the author's, in writing Home's life a number of years afterwards, speaks of both author and play in terms of the highest eulogy.

Douglas was not Mr Home's first dramatic work. So early as the autumn of 1749, he went to London, and offered Mr Garrick his play of *Agis*. Garrick did not accept it, alleging as a reason that it was not well adapted for the stage. So Home, with his vanity sorely mortified, vented his feelings in writing some verses on Shakspeare's monument in Westminster Abbey. It is well that in the present age the vergers are more alert in doing their duty, and do not allow disappointed poets

to scribble on the monuments in Poets' Corner. Evidently Home must have taken a copy of his verses in his pocket book, for it is given in the *Life* by Mackenzie. The lines run as follows :—

“ Image of Shakespeare ! to this place I come
To ease my bursting bosom at thy tomb ;
For neither Greek nor Roman poet fired
My fancy first, thee chiefly I admired ;
And day and night revolving still my page,
I hoped, like thee, to shake the British stage ;
But cold neglect is now my only mead,
And heavy falls it on so proud a head.
If powers above now listen to thy lyre,
Charm them to grant, indulgent, my desire ;
Let petrification stop this falling tear,
And fix my form for ever marble here.”

Evidently the “ powers above ” did not hearken, for Home eventually returned to Athelstaneford. Here he immediately set about writing *Douglas*, the plot of which, according to Carlyle, first occurred to him on hearing Mrs Janet Denorn, Mrs Hepburn's sister-in-law, sing the old ballad of “ Gil Morrice.” Five years afterwards, for he took that space of time in the composition of his tragedy, namely, in February 1755, with the play in his pocket, Mr Home set off on horseback from his house in East Lothian for London. The opinions at that time entertained by his friends as to the excellence of the piece and its certainty of success were very sanguine. This is evident from Dr Carlyle's account of the commencement of the author's journey. He was accompanied a certain distance on his way by some of his most intimate friends, of whom Dr Carlyle was one ; and he relates, that the habitual carelessness of Mr Home was strongly shown by his having thought of no better conveyance for his MS., “ by which he was to acquire all that fame and future success of which his friends were so confident, than the pocket of the greatcoat in which he rode,” Dr Carlyle and his other friends were troubled for the safety of the Drama, their admiration of which he describes “as approaching to idolatry” ; so they “turned a little out of their road, to procure from a clergyman of their acquaintance the loan of a pair of saddle bags in which to deposit the MS.” Arrived in London, and armed with a powerful introduction, Home presented this “heir of his invention to ‘King David,’ as Mr Garrick was familiarly called. His theatrical majesty, however, returned it with the mortifying declaration that it was totally unfit for the stage ! So as a last resource,

the Edinburgh Theatre was tried, and Mr Digges put the work into rehearsal.”* “Its rehearsals,” Mr Mackenzie says, “were attended by that literary party, who were the constant companions of the author, and then the chief arbiters of taste and literature in Edinburgh—Lord Elibank, David Hume, Mr Wedderburn, Dr Adam Ferguson, Adam Smith, and others.” . . . “I was then a boy, but of an age to be sometimes admitted as a sort of page to the tea-drinking parties of Edinburgh. I have a perfect recollection of the strong sensation which *Douglas* excited among its inhabitants. The men talked of the rehearsals; the ladies repeated what they had heard of the story; some had procured, as a great favour, copies of the most striking passages, which they recited at the earnest request of the company. I was present at the representation; the applause was enthusiastic, but a better criticism of its merits was the tears of the audience, which the tender part of the Drama drew forth unsparingly.”†

The following account is by Dr Carlyle :—“I attended two rehearsals with our author and Lord Elibank and Dr Ferguson and David Hume, and was truly astonished at the readiness with which Mrs Ward conceived the lady’s character, and how happily she delivered it.” . . . “The play had unbounded success for a great many nights in Edinburgh, and was attended by all the *literati* and most of the judges, who, except one or two, had not been in use to attend the theatre. The town in general was in an uproar of exultation that a Scotchman had written a tragedy of the first rate, and that its merit was first submitted to their judgment.”‡ Besides these posthumous accounts of the performance and of its great success, the following is doubly interesting, firstly, as being a contemporary criticism; and secondly, from its length, so unusual in newspaper notices at that time, and for many years afterwards :—

“To the printer of the *Caledonian Mercury*.”

“Sir,—Your inserting the following impartial observations on a late Dramatic work, will, I hope, oblige all your readers as well as your humble servant. If the merit of a work could be ascertained by the general approbation it receives during its representation, and the ardour with which all ranks crowd to the Theatre, or the irresistible power it has of drawing tears from every spectator, we might safely pronounce the tragedy of DOUGLAS to be one of the most perfect works of genius any age has produced. Experience, however, teaches us to be

* “Life of John Home,” &c.

† *Ibid.*

‡ Page 311, Carlyle’s “Autobiography.”

more reserved in our decisions ; and an ingenious critic has justly asserted, that the hour of publication is the hour that decides the reputation of a Dramatic performance. But though we must defer our final judgment of the piece till it can be calmly and deliberately scann'd in the closet, now is the time to pronounce on the merit and ability of the actors who, during the run of this play, have given so much pleasure to the public. The genius of the author, and the ability of the chief performers, seem, by good fortune, to have been formed to illustrate each other in the highest degree ; for we will venture to affirm, that as there is no other part that could have so fully shewn Mrs Ward's amazing powers in tragedy, so there is but one actress in Britain who could have performed the part of Lady Barnet* as well as she has done, and we are far from being certain that there is any actor at all who could have equalled Mr Digges in the character of DOUGLAS. Other actors there are, perhaps, who can express violent passions with more execution than that gentleman, and oftener raise pity and horror than he ; but in copying nature with judgment throughout a whole piece, in preserving the attention to recital, and in that charming simplicity of action, so long banish'd the stage, we think him inferior to no other actor in Britain. In the part of young Douglas, his excellent taste and judgment peculiarly appear. Other actors would have endeavoured to dazzle an audience by the most splendid action, and have shewn in a Scotch Theatre that Douglas was at least of as good blood as Piercy. But this judicious actor has taken no liberties of the kind ; for he has carefully followed what seems to be the author's idea. When Young Douglas first appears as a peasant's son, his native spirit struggling under the disadvantage of his condition and supposed birth, produces a bashfulness and modesty in his manners, which recommended still more to the noble patron whose life he has saved by his valor. And when he is afterwards instructed in the story of his birth, though he naturally assumes a nobler part, and gives freer vent to his spirit, yet he has still respect to the injunction of his mother, to bear himself in public as the son of Randolph. In short, this excellent actor seems to have copied exactly that beautiful picture Lady Barnet draws of her husband and son near the end of Act 3 commencing, 'As he looks now, so looked his noble father,' &c. While I am warmed by this young gentleman's theatrick excellence into so public a praise of it, I cannot help adjoining this testimony to the great satisfaction he has given to all ranks of people by the apparent good effect of these indefatigable labours he hourly bestows on the improvement and regulation of the Drama. When I assert I never desire to view the action of any dramatic work more perfectly or properly conducted than the *Douglas* was, I do but common justice in saying that every lover of elegant decency in theatrical entertainments is indebted to this gentleman for the propriety and strict regulation with which this, as well as every other piece, has been represented since his direction of our theatre. . . .

Yours, &c.,

CRITO."

All this success, however, as before shown, was not without most determined opposition. A moderate-sized pamphlet might be made up of the names alone, of the multitudes of separate publications, *pro* and *con*, that were published at the time. Dr Carlyle, who had been Home's fellow-student, and Adam Ferguson, both wrote supporting the Theatre party. A pamphlet by the former was entitled, "An Argument to prove

* The original name of Lady Randolph.

that the Tragedy of *Douglas* ought to be publically burnt by the hands of the Hangman." This was a purely ironical squib, and although cleverly written was so far beyond the comprehension of the opposition party, that they mistook the arguments as intended seriously, allowing their bigotry and lack of humour, which evidently went hand and glove, to make complete fools of them.

The run of the Tragedy, for the period and place, was undoubtedly without parallel; but we must be careful not to be misled into drawing comparisons with the long runs at the same period in London. As a matter of fact, the first run of *Douglas* does not seem to have extended beyond four consecutive "playing" evenings, namely, Tuesday 14th, Thursday 16th, Friday 17th, and Saturday 18th December, the advertisement distinctly saying that it "will be performed these evenings and *no more this season.*"* However, advertisements in those days, unlike the present day ones, were not infallible, and we find on Wednesday 22nd "by desire" it was again played, "being positively the last time of playing." Whether it was also performed on the Monday and Tuesday preceding, it is impossible to say, as the newspapers give no clue. At any rate, the limit of the length of its run, supposing it actually was played on the 20th and 21st (a most unlikely thing), would be but seven nights! It was not again played in Edinburgh till February 9th 1757, when "material alterations by the Author" were advertised.† In view of these facts several statements made by Carlyle in his Autobiography seem to be misleading, and the following relation, although sufficiently graphic not to require an apology for insertion, reads peculiarly like an innocent fiction on the worthy Doctor's part. "Digges rode out one forenoon to me, saying that he had come by Mr Home's desire to inform me that all the town had seen the play and that it would run no longer, unless some contrivance was fallen upon to make the lower orders of tradesmen and apprentices come to the playhouse. After hearing several ways of raising the curiosity of the lower orders, I desired him to take a walk for half-an-hour, and look at the view from Inveresk Churchyard, which he did; and in the mean time I drew up what I entitled, 'A full and true History of the Bloody Tragedy of *Douglas* as it is now to be seen acting in the Theatre in the Canongate.' This was cried about the streets next day, and filled the house for two nights more."

* *Courant*, 16th December.

† *Ibid.*

The cast of *Douglas* upon this its first production was as follows :—
Lady Barnet = Mrs Ward ; Anna = Mrs Hopkins ; Douglas = Mr Digges ;
Lord Randolph = Mr Younger ; Glenalvon = Mr Love ; Norval = Mr
Heyman.

At that time the doors of the theatre opened at five and the performance commenced at six. The charges were 2s. 6d. for Boxes and Pit, and 1s. 6d. for Gallery.

Mr. Digges, in the Character of Sir John Brute.




Oons, get you gone up stairs.

Act III. Sc. 1.

Printed by J. Harrison. f Nov. 1778.

CHAPTER VII.

DIGGES' MANAGEMENT—1756-7-8.

R DIGGES having the management in his own hands was not slow in showing that he meant to “deserve success” if he could not “command” it. To procure novelties was then an almost impossible task for a manager four hundred miles distant from the metropolis ; but Digges was possessed of exceptional energy and certainly, during his long although interrupted connection with the Edinburgh stage, showed himself most capable of catering well for the public. In the middle of the *Douglas* run, and when the excitement of the production might almost have been thought to have little more than begun, we find Digges making the following announcement :—“To oblige the public with as elegant a variety of Entertainment as possible the manager has procured from London the New Opera of *The Tempest* compos’d by Mr Smith, and play’d with the greatest applause to several crowded audiences last winter at the Theatre Royal in Drury Lane. That it may have the best chance of universally pleasing, he has introduced the several songs in the Opera into the business of the play, so that both Harmony and Action will, it is hop’d, in this performance contribute to the pleasure of the public. The new Grand Overture will be performed according to the score of the Opera, and nothing omitted but the recitative. There will be no music play’d before the New Overture.”* This is followed up with further interesting matter relative to the scenery.—“A principal scene of the *Tempest* rais’d by magic, is new painted for the occasion, with a perspective representation of the ship, rocks, ocean, &c. The stage will be entirely darkened for the representation of the storm ; the candles therefore cannot be lighted till after the commencement of the first act.”† The theatre was closed several days to admit of preparations, and when these were com-

* *Courant*, December 18th 1756.

† *Ibid.* Various days, December 1756.

pleted the piece was produced on the 28th. It is almost needless to add that with such elaborate preparations no gentlemen were admitted behind the scenes. The cast for the *Tempest* was as follows :—Singing Spirits—Milcha = Sadler, Ariel = Mrs Love; Prospero = Heyman; Trinculo = Love; Ferdinand = Younger; Caliban (with new song in character) = Stamper; Hypolito = Stamper; Miranda = Mrs Hopkins; Dorinda = Mrs Ward.

A piece called the *Royal Merchant*, “never acted here,” was performed on the 30th, in which was introduced a mock coronation of the King of the Beggars, “In which all ranks and order of beggars in their various ragged robes will walk with distinguishable gravity and comical decorum accompanied to the music of frying pans, porridge pots, salt boxes, &c.” This seemed to take, and was repeated on January 3rd. *Douglas* was repeated on February 9th and 14th, when (on the latter date at any rate) “select pieces of old Scots Music” were played between the acts. Mrs Ward took her benefit on the 26th February with *Venice Preserved* and *The Tamer Tamed* or *Catherine and Petruchio*, “never acted here.” The Pit and Boxes as well as Gallery were, on this occasion, laid out at 2s. 6d. Digges played the part of Jaffier, and Love—Pierre.

On March 10th a *Comedy* in two acts by Dr Smollett is advertised as in preparation at the Canongate Playhouse. This was probably the farce *The Reprisal*, which was brought out at Drury Lane on January 22nd 1757.

Douglas was advertised, “by desire of several Ladies of quality,” for March 15th, with a prologue intended to be spoke at its representation in England, as it is now in rehearsal at Covent Garden.

On the following evening (March 16th) for the benefit of Mr Thomson, late manager of the theatre, *The Drummer*, by the late ingenious Mr Addison. Tickets at Mr Thomson’s house at the Abbey. Mr Thomson evidently was a bankrupt, and the method of referring to this is decidedly entertaining. The advertisement goes on to say :—“N.B.—As Mr Thomson’s state of health will not permit him personally to wait on his friends, he humbly hopes that will plead his excuse, and that they will favour him with their company that night.”

On March 22nd Digges played Othello “for the first time.”

The season was an unusually long one, the performances lasting till after the middle of August, the last of which there is any record being on the 20th of that month. * During these nine months a very long list of plays

* See *Fragmenta Scoto Dramatica*, taken from original playbills.

was performed, among the most notable of which may be mentioned,—*The Conscious Lovers*, *Jane Shore*, *The Mask of Comus*, *The Mourning Bride*, *Hamlet*, *Merchant of Venice*, *Othello*, *The Beggars' Opera*, *The Rehearsal*, *Romeo and Juliet*, *Henry IV.*, *Twelfth Night*, and *The Provok'd Husband*.

The following season (1757-8) was opened about November 26th, on which day an announcement was made that "Mrs Mynitt," having been overturned in her chaise and her face greatly bruised, she would be unable to appear for a few nights. By the 10th December, however, she seems to have recovered, for on that evening she played Estifania in *Rule a Wife*. This lady played old women rôles, such as Mrs Peacham and the Nurse in *Romeo and Juliet*. She was the wife of William Mynitt, an excellent comedian; her own abilities, though respectable, do not seem to have been tremendous. According to Chetwood, in his "History of the Stage," "she had an amiable person and excellent voice, and was an agreeable actress both in tragedy and comedy." Another new comer, Mr Brown, was in all probability the former manager at Bath, with whom Mr Digges had been acquainted in Dublin during the season 1753-4. At that time Mr Brown had offered Mrs Ward an engagement at his theatre in Chester, of which, however, on her arrival, he denied all knowledge, although he was brought before the Mayor to compel him to keep his promise. Mr Digges, who was living within St James' Sanctuary in London, at the time expressed himself very indignantly on the subject in his letters to Mrs Ward. The difference, however, had evidently been made up, and we find Mr Brown making his first appearance in the Canon-gate on December 1st as King Richard III. About this time Mrs Ward had to be apologised for as being extremely indisposed, and Mrs Hamilton (who had also deputed for Mrs Mynitt) took her place. On the 26th December, *Macbeth* was performed, with "the characters entirely new dress'd, after the manner of the Ancient Scots." Mrs Ward's indisposition must have been pretty serious, for we do not find her name appearing again till the 18th January, when she played Queen Catherine in *Henry VIII.*, to Digges' Wolsey. It is worthy of note that Wolsey was one of the first parts this gentleman ever appeared in, in public, on which occasion he was dressed in a *shape*, as it was technically called, of the stiffest order; decorated with gilt leather upon a black ground, black stockings, black gloves, and a powdered periwig. In this guise he so tickled the humour of Foote, who was sitting in the pit, that that gentleman, waiting till the

customary round of applause had subsided, ejaculated in a pretended undertone,—“*A Roman chimney-sweeper on May-day.*” Like all Foote’s smart sayings, there was plenty of sarcasm and some wit in this, but of politeness or kindness none.

On January 3rd 1758, *The Alchemist* was given for the first time here. Abel Drugger = Brown ; Kastril = Digges ; Dol Common = Mrs Mynitt.

On the 9th, *Every Man in his Humour* was announced for the first time in Edinburgh. Captain Bobadil = Digges ; Dame Kately = Mrs Stamper.

On February 1st (for Mr Brown’s benefit), the *Gamester* was played for the first time in Edinburgh, with Brown and Mrs Ward in the chief parts. On the 9th, a note is appended to the foot of the bill, that alludes to what is clearly the first indications of the famous “High life below stairs” riot. It reads as follows:—“The *extreme offence* which the footmen in their gallery give almost every night to the audience, by incessant noise, and other abuses of the indulgence allowed them, has compelled this public notice, that on the first disturbance of any sort, which shall happen in that place, the *gallery shall be shut up*, and no servant shall be admitted gratis into any part of the house, on any account *whatsoever.*” Mr Digges took his benefit on the 11th, with the *Orphan*, and the ballet of the *Prussian Camp*. Home’s tragedy of *Agis*, which had been written previously to *Douglas*, was performed by Garrick, in Drury Lane, during this season (February 21st), with tolerable success, and was produced in Edinburgh for the first time on March 4th, the principal parts being sustained by Messrs Digges, Brown, Love, Holland, Parsons, Mrs Mynitt, Mrs Stamper, and Mrs Ward. It seemed to take a moderate share of success, for it was repeated on the 6th, 8th, and 14th. On the 22nd, *Merry Wives of Windsor*, with Digges as Dr Caius, a part no doubt well suited to his somewhat stilted and formal manner of acting. The season finished with a revival of the *Gentle Shepherd*, which had a remarkable run. It commenced on the 29th April, “the characters to be dressed in the Scots dresses,” and was repeated on May 2nd, 4th, 6th, 11th, 16th, and 20th—seven nights in all! Digges was Patie ; Peggy, by a person (being her first performance on any stage) ; Jenny = Mrs Ward. A “N.B.” upon the bills announces, “The utmost care and application has been taken to learn the Scots dialect in this piece as perfectly as possible, that the beauty of this excellent pastoral may

receive as much justice as is in the performers' power to give it." In those days the weather at that time of the year appears to have been different from what is usually experienced now, because upon the occasion of the final performance (20th) an assurance is given that "the house will be rendered extremely cool!"

During the progress of this season a rather amusing disagreement took place between the members of the orchestra and Mr Digges. The details, which have been preserved in copies of the original handbills distributed at the time by the different interested parties, afford us some glimpses of interesting matter connected with the economy of the theatre at the time. The real facts of the case seem to have been that Digges had failed to pay up arrears of salary, and that towards the end of the season the musicians, having too much reason to suspect that he might "take unto himself wings and fly away," resolved that unless the amount was paid up they would refuse to play. Digges, who perhaps had not got the money, for he was getting sorely into debt by this time, speedily found a pretext by which he could *forfeit* the entire money due to the band. This was to announce an opera* for a night (not one of the usual playing nights), upon which Mr Marine, the leader of the orchestra, was to give a concert in Mary's Chapel. Mr Marine promptly turned round and, addressing the audience, informed them that it being a concert night, and not one of the usual playing nights, he and his brother musicians would be unable to attend at the theatre. Digges then discharged Marine and a Mr Thomson, who he said had been impudent to him when demanding his money. This resulted in the band deserting in a body, and so firm was professional freemasonry among musicians in these days, that Digges could not get a single fiddler to come to his theatre, except two "poor lads," who, after playing a few nights, were boycotted to such an extent that they had to withdraw. The high moral tone that the musicians assumed in speaking of their wrongs, and the mighty dignity that Digges displayed in retorting, are alike extremely amusing. For instance, one broadsheet issued by the former commenced as follows:—"When the subjects of oppression are under the absolute dominion and uncontrolled power of lawless tyranny, there is no relief to their misery : tears and groans are the sole expressions of their grief. But in a land of liberty, where violence and injustice are restrained by public laws, wrongs may safely be complained of, without

* The pieces for the next playing night were always announced from the stage by the manager or one of the chief actors when the play for the evening had concluded.

dread of the taskmaster, and justice be obtained in spite of the oppressor. But though the law may restrain the outward act of wickedness, it cannot correct the depravity of the human heart: rancorous malice and deep-mouthed calumny will be liberally bestowed against the innocent person who is protected from other oppressions;" and so on through a long pompous introduction. The gravity with which the public were appealed to and the importance attached to the squabble are exquisitely ludicrous. After issuing several papers flatly contradicting each other, in which the musicians accused Digges of all sorts of things, and mentioned that Mr and Mrs Love among others of the players had refused to act unless they were paid up the arrears due to them, Digges got Mr Love to write denying this, many of the other members of the company wrote to the same effect, and Mr Phillips, clerk to the theatre, stated that £7, 9s. 6d. stg. was the total sum due by the management to the band. The amount, on the other hand, as stated by these gentlemen was £25, 15s., made up as follows:—

To Mr Reoch, per bill, - - -	£1 11 6
„ „ Do., for 8 nights at 4s. 6d.,* - -	1 16 0
„ „ Thomson, per bill, - - -	1 15 0
„ „ Do., for 8 nights at 5s., - - -	2 0 0
„ „ Smeitton, 8 nights in 1756 at 3s., - -	1 4 0
„ „ Do., 9 nights at 2s., - - -	0 18 0
„ „ Napier, 10 nights at 3s., - - -	1 10 0
„ „ Kercher, 9 nights at 4s., - - -	1 16 0
„ „ Do., per bill, - - -	1 6 0
„ „ Do., in part of a bill then due to him and others of the band, - - -	1 4 0
„ Mrs Fisher and Robison in part of do., - -	0 12 0
„ Mr Marine, 8 nights at 5s., - - -	2 0 0
„ „ Do., in part of a bill then due to him and others of the band, - - -	0 10 0
„ „ Stewart, 8 nights at 4s. 6d., - - -	1 16 0
„ „ Do., in part of a bill, &c., - - -	1 11 6
„ „ Do., for music books, - - -	0 8 0
„ „ Muggersland, 9 nights at 2s., - - -	0 18 0
One night due the whole band last season, - -	1 11 0
	<hr/>
	£24 7 0
Deduce paid Mr Kercher, 3s. 6d., - - -	0 3 6
	<hr/>
	£24 3 6
And add for three hands who attended at an enter- tainment in Mr Thomson's, vintner, in the Abbey by Mr Digges to the rest of the Comedians, - -	1 11 6
	<hr/>
	£25 15 0

* These were evidently extra playing nights.

How the quarrel was patched up is not on record, but it seems to have terminated amicably about the middle of April,* and the storm in the teacup being ended, matters went easier on both sides.

Some time in May (1758) Mrs Ward left Edinburgh to fulfil an engagement in Liverpool, where she performed till the end of August. During this time a regular correspondence was kept up between her and Digges. Copies of her letters having been preserved, were published by the late James Maidment.† It is necessary here to say something regarding the authenticity of these most interesting epistles, in view of the fact that their genuineness has often been questioned. Were the originals available at the present day, the writing, ink, paper, &c., would, in the hands of an expert, help to prove the fact for or against ; but as these are either destroyed, or concealed in the cabinet of some curiosity hunter, it remains for us to judge of them by internal evidence. At first sight, any one conversant with the history of the Edinburgh Stage might probably pronounce against them, or at least doubt their authenticity, for this reason, that the only two of Mrs Ward's letters which have the year affixed, bear date 1753, in which year Mr Digges had never seen Edinburgh. This, however, is evidently a misprint, and the 3 should be an 8. Careful reading and re-reading, combined with a knowledge of contemporary events, establishes this important point. The information in them corresponds minutely with that available from other and undoubted sources, and in all cases fits in perfectly with the bits of information otherwise known ; it is therefore perfectly safe to accept their evidence. Over and above the information they supply us regarding things external, as they may be called, *i.e.*, in connection with the management of the Edinburgh Theatre, they throw us many curious side lights into the more private concerns connected with that establishment. Thus we find, in the first place, that the long and—to judge by Digges' letters of former years—affectionate connection subsisting between that gentleman and Mrs Ward, was showing unmistakable symptoms in 1758 of drawing to a close. As is usual the gentleman was to blame for this, his conduct being not only unfaithful but cruel, and his

* The dispute has always been known as that of the "GENTLEMEN MUSICIANS," as they so styled themselves in their first manifesto. The other side, with more spleen than wit, termed them "fiddlers." An Epilogue, in commemoration of the amicable settlement of the disagreement, was written and intended to be spoken by Mr Stamper, on April 10th. It is fairly humorous, though not worth insertion here. The curious may find it in Logan's "Fragmenta Scoto-Dramatica."

† "Letters which passed between Mr West Digges, comedian, and Mrs Sarah Ward. Edinburgh, 1833."

manner peevish if not boorish. Mrs Ward seems, on the other hand, to have increased in her affection and devotion in proportion as he insulted and ill-treated her. Reading between the lines we find certain evidence that they were terribly in debt in Edinburgh. Digges was a gentleman who loved his ease and comfort above all things, and luxuries were not to be had, even in those cheap days, on a salary of four guineas a week,* with himself, Mrs Ward, and their several children to keep. Her immediate reason for leaving Edinburgh may not wholly have been Digges' cruelty, but it was certainly an important factor.† Money was no doubt partly the reason; for previous to her departure for Liverpool they seem to have been in great straits. While she acted in Liverpool important events were transpiring in Edinburgh, where Digges continued his residence. In the first place Bates, or Beat, or Beatts, as his name is variously spelt, appeared upon the scene. This was not his first connection with the "good town" however, for in 1745 he played no less important a part than that of proclaiming the Pretender at the Cross. He was at this time (1758) manager of the theatre in Newcastle, and had no doubt come to Edinburgh to try to effect a similar footing in the Canongate. Various schemes were spoken of, and it is very probable that had Digges been as good at intrigue as he undoubtedly was in management, or even had Mrs Ward been there to direct him, he would have secured for himself and her a firm and profitable position in the concern. He, however, allowed Beat and Callender to arrange with the proprietors to become joint managers. Not only did he fail to secure a footing in the management, but he even neglected to make a good bargain with Beat and Callender when they had obtained the coveted position. In this he was deplorably foolish, for with his and Mrs Ward's popularity he could have easily commanded even the large sum of £11, 11s., which was the amount she advised him to ask for their joint services per week.‡

Mrs Ward's plan was, that if Digges, Callender, and Beat got the management jointly, they should engage the company for nine months, opening at Newcastle on September 12th, Edinburgh December 12th, and Glasgow 12th April, remaining there till the end of May.§ Callender, on the other hand, wanted to engage for

* Such was their joint salary (benefits not included) for 1756-7-8. "Love Letters," p. 114.

† "Love Letters," p. 87, &c.

‡ *Ibid.*, p. 75.

§ *Ibid.*, p. 93.

the whole twelve months, a plan which Mrs Ward very pertinently points out was the beginning of Lee's ruin.* During her stay in Liverpool, Mrs Ward received several offers of engagements for the winter. One was from Barry, who was about to establish his memorable Crow Street Theatre in Dublin; another was from Garrick, couched in such a manner however that, whenever he thought she was not going to Dublin, he was able to sneak out of it. Garrick was a master of such finesse. The third, which was from Rich, although refused at the time, she eventually accepted. Her benefit at Liverpool was very poor, only £40, and she laments that she would not be able to pay off a Mrs Crassan in Edinburgh, who had lent her money, and who, although a sort of pawnbroker and money-lender, was evidently a great friend of hers. Some years afterwards, Mrs Crassan showed that her regard for Mrs Ward was genuine, for in 1762, when Digges arrived in Edinburgh with Mrs Bellamy, and wanted to borrow money from the old quarter, Mrs Crassan, indignant at his conduct to Mrs Ward, refused to have anything to do with him; and only consented to transact business upon Digges taking his oath upon the Bible that he was really married to Mrs Bellamy! Commenting upon this, Lee Lewis in his *Memoirs* says, "A pretty good stretch for a man who could never dine without saying grace, and frequently repeating it twice during the same meal!"†

There is also in these letters some talk of a Mr Gibson who was willing to purchase the theatre in his own and Digges' names; Digges to pay up his share out of the profits. That project came to nothing, for which, no doubt, Mr Gibson in after years was profoundly thankful. Mrs Ward went straight from Liverpool to Newcastle, where she assumed the name of Mrs Digges, by right of marriage, and entered into an agreement with Beat, for herself and Digges to open at Newcastle at nine guineas a week and six benefits. Digges arrived in due time, but after they had acted a few nights, Mrs Ward suddenly set off for London, where apparently she had a previous engagement with Mr Rich of Covent Garden. Her motives for so doing are difficult to fathom; but it is not unreasonable to suppose that her final disagreement and separation from Digges had much to do with it. There

* "Love Letters," p. 107.

† Vol. iii. p. 46. It should be borne in mind that, if this story is like a great many of Lewis' statements in his short account of the Scottish Stage, it requires the proverbial grain of salt.

is a letter without date,* the last included in the volume before mentioned, wherein she most pathetically informs Digges of her final decision that all is over between them. As before stated, Digges was greatly if not entirely to blame. His whole life was one of thoughtless indulgence, while she, although frail, seems to have possessed not only a tender and loving heart, but a forgiving spirit as well. The following extract, which concludes this epistle, sufficiently indicates this :—

“I hear give you up your vows : give them and your person where you have bestow’d your affection ; you shall never hear that I make the least complaint of you ; ’tis not yours, but nature’s fault that deprives me of you. Of what then can I blame you ? My sorrow shall be silent, and to myself alone. You know I have not a wish beyond you ; and that though I am now a writeing to you for the last time, and to take my leve of you for ever, I can’t help tell you that all my happeness is gone with you ; and find, from what resolution I will, I am doom’d to be wretched without you. Judg then what I must suffer ; but everything to afford ease is deny’d me ; the friendly releafe of tears, which would sometimes come to my ade, is now refused me. The love I bear Mr Digges will I cherish in my breast, and give it to his child, if it shall please God to let it see the light. Excuse me for mentioning what perhaps you do not choose to remember ; I could not help it. That you may be ever happy, is the wish of her who is your sincear friend and humble servant.”

“S. WARD.”

It is also possible that Mrs Ward’s leaving Newcastle may have been occasioned by the fact that Mr Love was the manager there for Beat. Mrs Ward had previously made the most solemn vows never to act in the same play with this gentleman, on account of his having done Digges some underhand action, the nature of which is not known, and perhaps the keeping of the vow may have hastened the end of her connection with Digges. She arrived in London in September ; and so her “strange eventful” history, for the present, is ended. Mrs Bellamy, who was acting at Covent Garden in 1758-9, thus mentions in her interesting memoirs Mrs Ward’s arrival.†—“We likewise found there Mrs Ward from the theatre at Edinburgh, whom Mr Rich had engaged for the ensuing season. She was accompanied by a frightful being, to whom she gave the title of husband. This lady had one of the most beautiful faces I ever beheld. But her figure was vulgar to a degree. By the stoop and magnitude of her shoulders it might be imagined that she had formerly carried milk pails. Her beauty would have been

* Written, however, evidently about the beginning of September, when she left Newcastle.

† P. 198.

much more conspicuous in that line than in the character of a queen or young princess."

It need scarcely be added to this, by way of comment, that Mrs Bellamy was a very jealous woman, and feared Mrs Ward supplanting her.

CHAPTER VIII.

CANONGATE CONCERT HALL—*Continued.*



EAT'S object in engaging Digges was clearly to secure the services of Mrs Ward. He would readily have given her good terms for herself, but she stuck steadfastly to her lover, and no doubt sacrificed her own interests by so doing. It was for this end, that is, to make Beat engage Digges, that she called herself Mrs Digges. Digges therefore must have reflected somewhat unpleasantly on his own conduct when, after Mrs Ward's departure, he was informed by Beat that there was no further use for his services. The engagement had been for both, and was broken by one of them leaving, so Digges went over to Ireland, where he seems to have got an engagement. Perhaps Beat had other reasons for thus getting rid of Digges. The actor's popularity was great, and his known wish to become manager, if not proprietor, made it dangerous to have him on the premises. This fear must have influenced Beat, otherwise it was clearly to his benefit to retain the services of an actor who could fill the house. Beat even admits as much in an address he issued the following year. In Mr James Aickin, however, he was successful in obtaining a leading actor of very high ability, to fill Digges' place, although he and Callender made but a sorry affair in the selection of the other members of the company. Six of their number are recorded by Tate Wilkinson in his valuable Memoirs* as having belonged for many years to the Portsmouth Theatre. "But in consequence of some pique," he says, "which had happened on my playing all the principal parts the year before" (he had been in the habit of "starring" at Portsmouth during the summer), "several had taken it so much in dudgeon that a great desertion ensued. The hero, Mr Cook (*alias* Gentleman), who, though very lame in years,

* P. 91, vol. ii.

had been the stock Romeo,* Mr Gates, Mrs Price (who afterwards married Mr Parsons), Mrs Mozeen, Mr and Mrs Fitzmaurice, all had invited themselves on a jolly party for Scotland." Wilkinson's poor opinion of them, which he expresses pretty freely, was evidently endorsed by the Edinburgh audiences.

Mr James Aickin,† who took Digges' parts, was unquestionably an actor of talent; it is worth noting that according to Wilkinson‡ Foote expressed great admiration for his ability. The season opened on November 13th;§ and the only item of importance that occurred until the end of March, was the production for the first time in Edinburgh of *The Earl of Essex*, during December. In the *Courant* of March 17th, 1759, is the following interesting announcement:—"Last Thursday (March 15th) evening, arrived here from London Mr Foote, and will perform on Tuesday the part of Cadwallider in a farce of his own composing, called the *Author*." Foote had been acting during the autumn of the previous year at Drury Lane. Garrick's resources at that time had been much weakened through the desertion of Mr Woodward and several other performers, who, with Mr Barry of Covent Garden, had made common cause, and started a new theatre in Dublin—the famous Crow Street Theatre. So the "great little man" in his difficulty was obliged to conciliate Foote, for whom, however, he retained to the full extent his bitter antipathy; and had him (in conjunction with Wilkinson) acting during the autumn of 1758. However, Foote's London Benefit, through a sudden freak of the Lord Chamberlain not allowing the Farce of the *Author* to be played, was but a poor house; so during the months of January and February Foote was considerably pinched for funds. Always a man of excessive extravagance, an unexpected mishap such as this threw him on his

* The following paragraph from the *Edinburgh Chronicle*, published the next year (December 3rd, 1759), evidently refers to this gentleman:—"I once imagined our ladies had more humanity, the gentlemen a better taste, than to sit tame spectators, as they last winter did, while good old Lear was barbarously murdered on the stage, not by his daughters, but by a limping fiend of an actor. How ridiculous was it to see Lord Townley, with one leg short and the other long, like a hen on a hot girdle, hirpling through the stage." Then again—"Who could endure to see the awkward Gates gnawing the noble words of Shakespere to pieces? I one day (still speaking of season 1758-59) saw Mr Beatt's actors arrayed in their own filthy rags, drawn up in order behind the scenes. Never till that moment stood I in such a presence; never till then had I a right idea of Sir John Falstaff's recruits."

† Aickin is the spelling Jackson gives; Genest gives it Aikin. The former way was probably correct; it was adopted in the bills of the play at any rate.

‡ *Memoirs*, p. 92, vol. ii.

§ *Courant*, November 11th, 1758.

beam ends, and during these two months, according to Wilkinson, his narrow purse produced a long face and a spare table, two things not by any means to Foote's liking. He was, however, remarkable for resource, and on this occasion, after casting about a little, he hit upon the expedient of writing to Callender at Edinburgh, who, in the midst of a poor season, readily snatched at what was almost sure to prove a big attraction, and so Foote prepared to set out for the north.

"At that time," says Wilkinson,* "birds of passage from London to Scotland were experiments unknown—for it was judged impossible for a London theatrical sunflower to survive the chillness of such a barbarous northern clime; but opinions and experience, which make fools wise, have proved it to be not only a happy asylum, but as fine a hothouse for the preservation, and as good a nursery for rare and delicate plants as ever those of Drury Lane and Covent Garden could at any time produce. Foote at Edinburgh was quite a phenomenon. Every one in London stared at his strange disposition, to adventure from the metropolis of England a journey of 400 miles to Edinburgh, and wondered that an actor of eminence should venture to a place where, at that time, a sixty pound benefit was a treasure."

The following extract is from the *Memoirs of Samuel Foote* by Cooke,† and graphically describes his method of "raising the wind" for the journey:—

"'Well,' said Foote to his friend Wilkinson, on receiving the letter from Mr Callander, 'this Scotch expedition must be risked; but where are the ways and means? I must solicit Garrick, I believe, and yet it vexes me to the heart to let him assume such a superiority over me, even in money matters; yet necessity has no law.' Garrick was accordingly applied to next day for the loan of £100, which he readily granted; but (as Wilkinson remarks), in his usual manner of conferring favours, 'he would endeavour to see Pritchard (the treasurer of Drury Lane), about noon, and *then* he would speak to him about it; and *then* he (Foote) might draw on him in the evening for the sum, leaving a note of acknowledgment for the amount.' Foote, although not too proud to ask the favour from Garrick, was above appearing before Pritchard the treasurer to receive the cash, so he employed his friend and rival mimic Wilkinson to do the errand for him; and at a supper they gave to their boon companions that night (off Garrick's money), Foote, while ridiculing Garrick's poetry, said, 'that poor David's verses were so wretchedly bad, that should he himself die first, he dreaded the thought of Garrick composing his epitaph.'"

"His trip to Edinburgh was very successful. The gentry received him into their houses, and the public were received by him (in the theatre) in great numbers, and he returned to London in the May following in good health and spirits—and with a full purse."

* *Memoirs*, vol. ii. p. 72.

† P. 92.

Foote was splendidly received in Edinburgh; according to Wilkinson,* “it answered much better than was expected; the stage at that time being a place of resort in Edinburgh only for such independent persons as dared to judge for themselves, and venture into that seat of profanation.”

Besides his own pieces,—*The Author*, *The Diversions of the Morning*, and *The Englishman Returned from Paris*, Foote appeared as Shylock, Gomez in the *Spanish Friar*, the Earl of Essex, Bayes in the *Rehearsal*, Sir Paul Plyant in the *Double Dealer*, &c., and gave what in all probability was the first morning performance of a play in Scotland. It was on Friday, March 30th; the doors open at 11, and the “curtain to draw up at 12.”

About this time a proposal was published by Mr Alexander Thomson, late sole proprietor of the Canongate house—the same gentleman mentioned a few pages back as living at Holyrood,—to print by subscription “An Historical Account of the Stage in Edinburgh.” Subscriptions were taken by the Author at “Falstaff’s Head” at the foot of the Canongate, price to be 2s. Nothing seems, however, to have come of it.†

In the month of June a scheme was proposed in the columns of the *Edinburgh Chronicle*, by which criticisms of the theatrical performances were to be printed regularly. It was suggested that the writers should be independent gentlemen, who in this way might afford healthy advice to the players and agreeable entertainment to the public. The original scheme fell through, but was again taken up, with the result that a pamphlet‡ of 50 pages was published early in 1760, entirely devoted to notices of the performances that had taken place during the summer season six months previous!§

During the summer, Callender, who seems to have been disgusted with the bad business that had been done all season, left the concern. Beat, now sole manager, according to Lee Lewis,|| “having no stock to proceed upon, contrived to persuade one Dawson of Newcastle, who kept a carrier’s inn, and in a low way had scraped together a tolerable sum of money, to undertake with him the joint management.” Had Beat been wise in his generation, he would also have taken Digges into

* Memoirs, vol. ii. p. 74.

† The writer has been unable to find any trace of its having been published.

‡ “A view of the Edinburgh Theatre during the summer season, 1759, &c., by a Society of Gentlemen. London, 1760, price 1s.”

§ During the following season the *Edinburgh Chronicle* devoted considerable space to the subject of the Drama. See p. 110.

|| Memoirs, vol. iii. p. 48.

the concern, and so have secured skill as well as capital, neither of which qualifications he himself possessed. Digges still had his eye on the place, and arrived in Edinburgh on the 8th of November. That he fully meant business is proved by the fact of his announcing his arrival in the newspapers, after which the paragraph, or advertisement as it really was although in paragraph form,* goes on to say :—"The excellent performance of this *actor* gives the most pleasing expectations to all lovers of dramatic entertainments, that we shall once more see theatrical representations worth our attention. *Ribaldry* and *trash* will give place to *taste* and *truth*, and the works of a Shakspeare will be exhibited by a Gentleman who has established his merit as an actor ; as well by a judicious taste in the conception of character, as by equal abilities in the public performance of it." A puff, the style of which clearly betrays Digges' own hand. However Beatt, who did not seem to see the matter quite in the same light, refused him an engagement, and perhaps even said nasty things of Digges behind that gentleman's back. At least Digges accuses him of this, and in the tone of a much injured man makes out his own defence against the charges in general, and that of the dismissal from Newcastle, the previous year, in particular. An article in the *Edinburgh Chronicle*† gives both a graphic and sensible account of the dispute. It says—

"A paper war is certainly a harmless war. While other wars, by unavoidable expenses, impoverish, it, by the duty arising from the consumption of paper, enriches a nation. Other wars destroy the subjects, it only the goose-quills of a country. The war which has been long carried on between Great Britain and France, is of the former ; that new commenced war between the sovereigns Digges and Beatts, of the latter kind. Digges, like Britain, boasts of his illustrious allies ; Beatts, like France, of his numerous subjects and dependents. Digges supports the expenses of war by credit ; Beatts, upon an emergency, can melt down, if not the plate, yet at least the tinsel ornaments of the tragic buskin. Digges, like his native country, despises, Beatt, like France, publishes anathemas against his enemies. Beatts, like France, is aspiring too high ; it is absolutely necessary to let him know himself. *Delenda est Carthage*, else Rome is undone. Beatts is undoubtedly blind to his own interest. Certain I am, that Digges' Hamlet and Macheath would in one month bring in more money to the managers than they received during the whole course of last winter's acting. . . . ‡ Upon the whole,

* The newspapers then had a column "EDINBURGH," which contained much miscellaneous information, all of it inserted as news, although much of it was paid for, just the same as advertisements. The theatre advertisements were always so inserted. The reason the writer is certain about Digges having paid for this announcement is, that the copy consulted for the present work was the original office file of the *Courant*, on which was marked then (and for many years after) the price of the *advertisements*, also if they were paid, or to whom they were to be charged. In this case the usual charge, "3s. 6d.," with "paid," is appended in ink.

† 3rd December 1759.

‡ Part of this article is printed in a note, p. 105.

if Mr Beatts brings not Mr Digges upon the stage, I would advise him to procure a set of tolerable puppets; the Company who would attend his actors will certainly attend his puppets. I can assure them, they will be more entertained, and equally well instructed by the latter."

Digges said that he had been "enjoined by persons whose commands I shall ever be proud to obey,"* to refute all the slanders said against him, and thanked the public as follows for their support of his cause:—† "The very remarkable spirit with which the town has been pleased to receive and consider my case lately publish'd, calls for my most publick and grateful acknowledgement." He goes on by warning the town that Beat is about to publish a counter statement to his. This, in the course of a couple of days, made its appearance, and gave a full account of the Newcastle dismissal recorded a few pages back.

In the mean time, about the end of November, the theatre opened, and about two weeks afterwards Digges was engaged. He says, in yet another of his many addresses, that he "cannot attribute his re-establishment on the stage of this metropolis to anything but public favour, and returns his thanks for the indulgent reception he met with on Saturday night." The following rather amusing "Simile" was published during the dispute:—

"A clown without one grain of sense
Assum'd an air of learning;
He thought it gave him consequence,
And that it look'd discerning.

He read, not knowing right from wrong,
As chance his will did vary,
Or mighty Milton's sacred song,
Or Ainsworth's dictionary.

One day a friend his choice decry'd
With much respect and breeding,
To whom the clod with sneer reply'd,
Why d—n me, is't not—READING?

Thus Beatt, the stage and critic's pride,
Deserves to be admir'd;
By him a Digges is laid aside,
And ev'ry stroller's hir'd.

And should the town his conduct blame,
As much from worth detracting;
He too will kindle in a flame,
And say, why, is't not—ACTING?"

* *Courant*, November 20th.

† *Ibid.*, December 1st.

Digges' first appearance this season was on December 15th, as Hamlet. The *Edinburgh Chronicle* speaking of this performance says,—“Nature has happily adapted his figure to the dignity and gracefulness of the part; and his knowledge of the Author is conspicuous in every line he utters.” It goes on to instance his delivery of the soliloquies as “critically perfect,” and declares that “they are not recited with the frigid exactness of mere declamation.” Again it commends the delicacy of his “first reception of Horatio and the two officers who come to acquaint him with the strange appearance of his Father's apparition? The surprise he assumes in the course of their narration is admirable;” and so on through a long, well written and evidently carefully thought over notice. On the 19th *The Recruiting Officer* was played, when from the same source we glean that the performance “owed its favourable reception to that genteel vivacity and easy spirit of frank good humour with which Mr Digges supported its principal character.”

The *Edinburgh Chronicle*, as may be gathered from the above, had been printing pretty exhaustive accounts of the theatrical doings in the Canongate. This departure, however, met with little support and even violent opposition, on the part of their readers, so towards the end of January (1760) the practice was discontinued.

On the evening of Wednesday, January 16th, the farce of *High Life Below Stairs* was announced for the first time in Edinburgh;* but the footmen in the city obtaining some information regarding the nature of the farce, and thinking that such a piece was an insult to them, determined upon opposition. Before the curtain drew up Mr Love came forward and read a letter which he had received, threatening both the managers and the playhouse in case that farce should be acted, and also saying that above seventy persons had engaged to sacrifice fame, honour, and profit, to prevent it. The audience, however, ordered the farce to be proceeded with, which was accordingly done; but almost immediately a great noise arose in the footmen's gallery. The gentlemen in the pit called to them to behave themselves, otherwise they would be turned out and never permitted to enter the playhouse again. As the men would not stop, this had actually to be done before the performance could be gone on with. The immediate result of this was the closing of the footmen's gallery, into which these gentlemen's gentlemen had hitherto been admitted free, and the insolent

* It had been brought out in London the preceding autumn.

behaviour of the men on this occasion hastened the abolition of the objectionable system of "Vails," or drink money, at that time insisted upon by the footmen from gentlemen for the most trifling services rendered.

A Mr Reddish, who was a member of the company this season, it is worth noting, afterwards married Mrs Canning, the mother of the statesman and orator George Canning. He seems to have been a poor actor, and eventually died a maniac in the York Asylum.* The following is from the columns of the *Courant*:—"We are told that on Monday next (April 21st, 1760), there will be a grand procession by the honourable fraternity of free and accepted masons at the laying of the foundation stone of the charity workhouse for the parish of the Canongate,—after which they will walk in order to the playhouse, when the tragedy of *Macbeth* is to be acted for the benefit of that charitable institution." During the course of this season it may be noted that Milton's *Masque of Comus* and *The Guardian* were both produced.

The next season was ushered in by an announcement that Season Tickets could be procured at Mr Beat's house in Monteith's Close, and year after year we find the same announcement as long as Beat continued in the management. Nothing important occurred during the season. Digges was gone, apparently to Ireland, and in his place Lee, who since his imprisonment seems to have met with many reverses, was engaged. On the 5th of February 1761, *The Way to Keep Him* was acted for the first time in Edinburgh, with Lee, Aickin, Parsons, King, Mrs Love, &c., in the cast; and on April 18th, by desire of the Duke and Duchess of Douglas, the *Beggars' Opera* was given for the benefit of the poorhouse in the Canon-gate,—Macheath = Mr Love; Polly = Mrs Mozeen—with *High Life Below Stairs* as an afterpiece. On May 2nd, Mr Lee, by way of "farewell," read Milton's *Paradise Lost*, in the forenoon, at 2s. 6d. a ticket; the performance to be given within Mr La Motte's large room in James' Court.

During the summer Mr Sheridan paid Edinburgh a visit. Recently turned out of his own theatre in Dublin, he had been staying in London, and came north with a big project of giving two sets of eight lectures each; the first set on Elocution, and the second on the English tongue. The most extraordinary thing is that he actually completed both sets, the lectures being given in the operating room of the Royal Infirmary.

* Representative Actors, p. 424-5.

CHAPTER IX.

JACKSON, DIGGES, AND BELLAMY.



THE season 1761-62—a notable one as it proved—opened in December; the first performance of which there is any note being on the 26th, when the *Rehearsal* was played. On the 28th, *The Busybody*—Marplot = Griffith; Miranda = Mrs Brooke. Spectacle in those days, although not attempted in anything like the lavish manner in which even ordinary plays are mounted in our time, was much in vogue, and from various sources of information we learn was as potent an attraction then as it is now.

On January 6th, *King Henry VIII.* was played,—“introducing the procession from the Abbey at the Coronation of Anne Bullen, with the ancient ceremony of the Champion in Westminster Hall.” January 9th, *Oroonoko*—“The part of Oroonoko by a gentleman.”

The “gentleman” was no other than Mr John Jackson, who afterwards came prominently before the Edinburgh public as actor, manager, and author. He was the son of an English clergyman, and had received a liberal education. As a man, and as a manager, he had many good as well as bad qualities. As an actor, he seems to have been fairly successful, but of his capacity as an author, it is perhaps best not to say anything. His greatest weakness was self-conceit, which, never small, grew with his years, till it finally ruined him by bringing him constantly into quarrels with everybody he came in contact with.

By his own statement,* he wished to make his *debut* in the part of young Norval. Mr Love, who was Beat’s general manager, was afraid to risk this, as the remembrance of Digges in the part was still so fresh in the minds of the audience, so *Oroonoko* was put up. Jackson, however,

* History of Scottish Stage, p. 32.

persisted in his wish to play young Norval, so the play was soon afterwards given out, and the bills were posted in the town. On the morning of the performance Jackson breakfasted with Mr Love, at which meal he reports the following conversation to have taken place:—

Mr Love.—"Mr Digges has arrived in Edinburgh."

Mr Jackson.—"I am glad of it, as he will have an opportunity of seeing, for the first time, that favourite character exhibited by another."

Mr Love.—"That is very true, sir; and it may yield you some temporary gratification in the performance. But what will be the consequence? My advice is, that you should defer it, as it will certainly be one of Mr Digges' first performances, and comparisons may be unfavourable. Shall—shall I order the playbills to be suppressed?"

Mr Jackson (with great deference).—"What ever you think right, I shall certainly concur in."

Mr Love.—"I was certain you would see this in the same light with myself. I shall therefore order the bills to be taken down."

"He had the door in his hand, when I thus accosted him: 'Sir, I have not the least objection to your putting a stop to the representation of the play of *Douglas*, if you think it for *your* advantage. Certain I am that it is not for *mine*; and mark the consequence. If I am not permitted to perform *Douglas* to-morrow night as advertised, I never will appear again, in any other part, upon the Edinburgh stage.' " *

Jackson adds that Love acknowledged Digges had prompted him to persuade Jackson not to play Young Norval. Whether this was the case or not is of no consequence. If Digges was jealous, he did not long remain so, for, after witnessing Jackson's first performance in the piece from the third row of the pit,[†] he consented, on Jackson's acting it the second time, to take the part of the Old Shepherd. This was on March 5th, when Miss Phillips was the Lady Randolph. John Home, the author, was present at Jackson's first performance of Young Norval, and assured that gentleman "he had scarcely ever been so well satisfied with the playing of the part of *Douglas*."[‡] It was a curious trait in Home's character, that for nearly fifty years after this he made a similar statement to every one in succession who essayed the part. During the season Jackson appeared in quite a number of characters, including Oroonoko, Romeo, Earl of Essex, Osmyn (*Mourning Bride*), Don Felix (*Wonder*), Jaffier, Douglas, Hamlet, Prospero, &c., &c. Digges also

* Jackson, *History of Scottish Stage*, p. 34.

† *Ibid.*, p. 37.

‡ *Ibid.*, p. 37.

acted many of his old parts ; but the Edinburgh playgoers had a greater treat in store for them than the acting either of Digges or Jackson. The first intimation of this appeared in the *Courant* of May 1st, as follows :—

“The following Four PLAYS ONLY
will be performed successively at the Theatre, Canongate :—

TANCRED AND SIGISMUNDA,
RULE A WIFE AND HAVE A WIFE,
JANE SHORE,
and the PROVOKED HUSBAND,

in which a gentlewoman will appear for the first time on the stage of this kingdom.

“Particular tickets (at the usual prices) will be printed, as no money will be received at the door. Whoever chuses Boxes for the said four performances, as none will be let separately, are requested to send as soon as possible to Mr Digges, who will attend every morning at the Theatre for that purpose from 10 to 4, and to prevent mistakes, Ladies are entreated to send their commands in writing.

TANCRED AND SIGISMUNDA,
first play on Wednesday, May 5th, to begin punctually at 7. Occasional prologue by Mr Digges.

“The succeeding plays will immediately follow on Thursday, Friday, and Saturday. As these performances will be conducted with the utmost regularity and decorum, no person whatever will be admitted behind the scenes.”

Such was the first announcement of the appearance of the beautiful Mrs Bellamy, a lady who had been in the first rank as an actress in London, and who—partly owing to her high parentage on her father’s side,* and partly to her own vivacity, beauty, and wit—had been admitted to the first houses and the most select companies for a long time ; indeed until her gigantic extravagance and openly loose manner of life had caused her to fall many degrees into difficulties and neglect. The season previous to this † she had been in Dublin, and while there was introduced to Digges. Although warned against Digges’ persuasive tongue, good looks, and loose standard of morality, she speedily formed a violent attachment for him, and the couple—both steeped to the ears in debt—assisted each other in warding off angry creditors’ attacks, and getting out of awkward fixes. On the principle of getting out of the frying-pan into the fire, Digges, as we have seen, came to Edinburgh in the beginning of the year. Mrs Bellamy, however, from some wayward caprice, refused to accompany him to Scotland ; but, perhaps finding his absence more difficult to bear than her repugnance to the “Land o’ Cakes,” she eventually followed her swain, and getting to a village ten miles from

* She was a natural daughter of Lord Tyrawley.

† 1760-1.

Edinburgh, refused to go any further, and took a vow never to enter the gates of the "good town." All entreaties were useless, so Digges, who well knew what a "catch" she would prove to the theatre if she could be got to perform, was compelled to have recourse to stratagem. It is best to give the account of her advent to the Scottish capital in her own words :—*

"A post chaise came to convey me on to the Grassmarket, as the driver told me. This I supposed to be a town. When I arrived at an Inn in the Canongate, a woman waited for me, of a most extraordinary figure. She was very lusty, had been handsome, was intolerably dirty, and was without stays. She came to conduct me to my apartments. She acquainted me that she had ordered dinner at the Inn where we were ; particularly, a very fine *turbot*, which she dwelt much upon. To my great surprise, when the boasted dinner appeared, the very fine *turbot* proved to be a large piece of coarse thornback.

"Between six and seven o'clock in the evening, a coach came to convey me to my apartments. When we arrived, after having mounted three pair of stairs, I was introduced to the *genteel Miss Coulstone*.

"The sound of music now reached my ears. Upon my enquiring from whence it came, I was answered, from the Theatre, which was directly opposite. I no sooner made the discovery, than I took a pair of scissors, and cut my hair off quite close to my head, to prevent my being solicited to appear in public.

"The piece which was performing was the *Beggars' Opera*, in which my gentleman (Mr Digges) acted Macheath, a part he was esteemed very capital in. After the Opera, he hastened to me, when he informed me that the English papers having announced my absence, it was conjectured who the new comer was. The next day, Mr Bates, joint proprietor of the Edinburgh Theatre, with Mr Dawson, the acting manager, acquainted Mr Digges that it would be useless to open the doors, unless he could induce me to appear upon their stage.

"There was no other alternative but my conforming to Mr Bates' wishes. The loss of my hair was the greatest bar to my appearance. However, for the first time I had recourse to false ; and as I had not even necessities, I was obliged to have cloaths made at a great expense. But my success was so beyond expectation, that I was very well enabled to do this. Curiosity induced families to come from all parts of the country.

"The season being so far advanced, eight nights were to be the limited number of my performing, and the last was to be for my benefit. The morning of that day I was arrested by the creditor who had been the occasion of my indiscreet flight from London. I was, however, soon set at liberty, the caption being against the laws of Scotland, which allow some days' notice to debtors before they can be taken. Upon this occasion, the first lawyers in the kingdom were volunteers in my cause, particularly Mr Montgomery, afterwards chief Baron and Dean of the Faculty.

"As good frequently springs from evil, this misfortune seemed to be the means of procuring me the attention and civility I met with in so eminent a degree, during my residence in this

* From *Life of Bellamy*, page 210.

kingdom. In particular, it procured me the happiness of being admitted into the family of Mr Montgomery, upon the most intimate footing, of which I shall always have the most grateful sense. The most attached patronesses I had, besides those of the Montgomery family, which were numerous, were the Duchess of Douglas and Miss Elphinstone. Lord Ruthven likewise honoured me with his support."

Mrs Bellamy's first appearance in Edinburgh, as already noted, was on Wednesday, May 5th, in *Tancred and Sigismunda*, when the following Prologue was spoken by Mr Digges:—

A PROLOGUE.

SPOKE AT EDINBURGH ON MRS BELLAMY'S FIRST APPEARANCE THERE.

"In early days, when error swayed mankind,
The scene was censured, and the stage confin'd.
As the fine Arts a nobler taste supply'd
Old prejudice grew fainter—droop'd—and dy'd.
Merit from sanction must deduce her date,
If she'd arrive at a meridian height ;
From sanction is the English stage become
Equal to Athens, and above old Rome.
If from that stage, an actress filled with fears,
New to this northern scene, to-night appears,
Intent—howe'er unequal to the flight,
To hit—what critics call—the *happy right* ;
She builds not on your sister's* fond applause,
But timidly to you submits her cause ;
For taste refin'd may as judicial sit
Here, as she found her in an English Pit.
Your plaudit must remove the stranger's fear ;
The sons of genius are the least severe.
Some favour from the fair she's sure to find ;
So sweet a circle cannot but be kind.
Then to your candid patronage she'll trust
And hopes you gracious—as we know you just."

Expectation, regarding Mrs Bellamy's talents, seems to have been carried to a high pitch, and, from all accounts, was not disappointed in the result. The *Courant* newspaper, which very rarely took any notice of performances *after* they had taken place—the announcements in advance alone being paid for—on this occasion, so far departed from its usual procedure as to print the following paragraph:—†

* London.

† May 8th.

“The expectation of the public was never so highly raised, nor its pleasure so truly gratified, as they have been for some nights at the Theatre. The house has been generally filled by five o’clock, and crowds turned away for want of room.” Although only advertised at first for four performances, Mrs Bellamy, as she herself observes, was engaged for eight. Accordingly, on May 11th, by particular desire of the Duchess of Hamilton, *The Provok’d Wife*; Sir John Brute by Mr Digges, “being his first appearance in that part these five years.” Lady Fancyfull, by a gentlewoman, &c.; “places to be taken as before, from Mr Digges at the Theatre.” Possibly the seats did not go off quite so quickly as expected, for on May 10th, a rather obvious puff was inserted, as follows:—* “Many people having been turned from the doors of the Theatre last week for want of room, to satisfy public curiosity, and in obedience to the request of several persons of distinction, the house will continue open ONE WEEK LONGER.” During this week, which consisted of four acting nights, *The Orphan*† was produced, with Monimia by Mrs Bellamy, Castalio by Mr Jackson, Polydore by Mr Aickin, and Chamont (1st time) by Mr Digges; *Romeo and Juliet*,‡ Jackson and Mrs Bellamy in the title rôles, Mercutio = Mr Griffiths, and Friar = Mr Love; and *Macbeth*, with Digges as Macbeth, Mrs Bellamy as Lady Macbeth, Macduff = Mr Aickin. Jackson, in his History, records the following curious incident which occurred during the above performance of *Romeo and Juliet*. “I remember her finding fault with my approaching too near her in the balcony scene. I apologised, by observing that it was impossible to refrain from even scaling the wall, if accessible, when so charming an object was in view. In this, I judge, I had nature for my guide.” As a matter of fact, the way in which the lights were arranged on the stage in these days made it necessary, if the Juliet was to be seen to advantage, that the Romeo should stand far back on the stage, or out of the focus, as it was termed, and where he was scarcely visible. Jackson avows the matter of the lights was furthest from his thoughts when he acted as above; but Mrs Bellamy, in spite of his polite speech, thought otherwise, and consequently, next season, when she was all-powerful in the management, Jackson did not get an engagement—or as he puts it in his History, “he did not choose to accept one.”

Digges, anxious for a few more “golden eggs,” announced other

* *Courant*.

† May 12th.

‡ May 13th.

three plays, and endeavoured to persuade Mrs Bellamy to appear ; but she had taken some tantrum, and positively refused to play again, save on one evening, for her own benefit.

This took place on the 22nd, the other two performances being advertised as a "mistake." The piece she selected for her benefit was *Cleone*. Digges took his benefit on the last night of the season, the 29th,* with the *Beggars' Opera*. Captain Macheath = Digges ; Peachum = Aickin ; Lockit = White ; Lucy = Mrs Parsons ; Polly = Mrs Mozeen. Tickets and places to be had of Mr Digges at his lodgings near Queensberry House in the Canongate.

The long summer recess now set in, and it would have been strange indeed if an even less restless and enterprising mind than that of Mrs Bellamy had not turned its attention to the hitherto little-explored field of action that Glasgow afforded. That city was, in fact, far behind Edinburgh in the matter of polite amusements, and, until the year under notice, had not possessed anything approaching the dignity of a regular theatrical establishment. Of Glasgow, nineteen years previous to this period, namely in 1743-4, Dr Carlyle writes as follows :—† "There never was but one concert during the two winters I was at Glasgow, and that was given by Walter Scott, Esq., of Harden, who was himself an eminent performer on the violin, and his band of assistants consisted of two dancing-school fiddlers and the town waits." Although not connected with the present subject, it is worth noting that Carlyle likewise records post chaises and hackney coaches to have been unknown then in the western capital. Of sedan chairs they had some three or four, which, Carlyle says, were kept for "carrying midwives about in the night, and old ladies to church or to the dancing assemblies once a fortnight." It may be mentioned, at the same time, that another class of amusements, (?) of scarcely so reputable a nature as theatres and concerts, flourished amazingly. Nineteen years had, however, seen giant strides made in Glasgow in the matter of improvements, and it is not surprising that Mrs Bellamy received a cordial invitation to spend the summer months at St Mungo's city. Her own account of the expedition requires no apology for its insertion here :—

"Upon my first engaging at Edinburgh, the gentlemen of Glasgow offered to build a theatre by subscription, if our company would promise to perform there in the summer. To

* Mrs Bellamy did not appear on this occasion.

† Autobiography.

this we readily consented, as the inhabitants were not only opulent, but liberal to a degree. The theatre being now ready, we formed very agreeable ideas of the jaunt.

"When we were about to set off, after having discharged my bills, I found I had not cash sufficient to defray the expenses of the journey. The chaises were ordered and expected soon to be at the door. Not knowing how to raise any money I sent one of my women, whose name was Waterstone, to a watchmaker's in the High Street, to dispose of the silver repeater Mr Digges had given me. The person I directed her to apply to had gained a reputation by making several for that great mechanical genius, the Duke of Argyll. The chaises were now at the door, and I waited with the greatest impatience for the arrival of the money some hours."—Vol. iv. p. 13.

It seems that the repeater had been bought by Digges but never paid for, and as the girl unluckily went to the maker of the watch to dispose of it, he very rightly had her locked up in the Tolbooth! Mrs Bellamy in her usual manner got into a terrible state of excitement, but eventually procured influence for the girl's release—and enough money to take her to Glasgow.

* "The next day at noon we saw the delightful city to which we were going, at a little distance before us. The magnificence of the buildings and the beauty of the river elated my heart.

"When we arrived at Glasgow one of the performers exclaimed, 'Madam, you are ruined, for you have nothing left but what you have in the chaises.' I was informed that the stage of the new theatre had been set on fire the night before, and that all my paraphernalia and wardrobe, which lay there unpacked, had been consumed by the flames.

"The conflagration I found was occasioned by the following circumstance. A Methodist teacher, who held forth in the city, told his auditors that he dreamed, the preceding night, he was in the infernal regions at a grand entertainment, where all the Devils in Hell were present, when Lucifer, their chief, gave a toast, the health of Mr —, who had sold his ground to build him a house upon (meaning the theatre), and which was to be opened the next day for them all to reign in.

"The poor, ignorant, enthusiastic hearers of this *Godly* preacher found their enmity against Satan and his subjects instantly inflamed by this harangue. And in order to prevent so alarming an extension of his infernal majesty's empire, they hastened away in a body to the new playhouse and set the stage on fire. Luckily the flames were extinguished before any other part of the theatre was consumed. It appeared that this religious mob had been joined by others who wished to take advantage of the conflagration, as a great deal of the false trumpery upon the regalia of mock kings and queens had been taken away, and being found of no value, lay scattered about the fields. As the theatre was a mile from the city, and the flames did not burst out so as to become visible, the incendiaries completed their design and silently retired.

"Instead of throwing myself into violent agitations and lamenting my loss, as many

* It is well to mention that, according to Tate Wilkinson (*Memoirs*, vol. iii. p. 230), the incidents here mentioned happened in 1764, after Mrs Bellamy's last season in Edinburgh. She certainly went to Glasgow in that year; but whether on this particular expedition is very questionable.

would have done, I very coolly said I would go and view the ruins : and ordered the chaise to drive immediately to the theatre. I there viewed the ashes of all my finery, which had cost me many, many hundreds of pounds, and at that time, upon a moderate computation, £900, there being among them a complete set of garnets and pearls, from cap to stomacher. When I returned to the inn I enquired for Mr Bates, for as to the other partner I never had any knowledge of him.

“Having got the loan of clothes and having fitted up a temporary stage they acted the *Citizen* and the *Mock Doctor*. *Macbeth* and *Douglas* were much called for. But these pieces could not be performed till cloaths proper for appearing in them were made and brought from Edinburgh. As I had no black vestment of any kind sent to me among the numerous ones of different colours, I made that an objection to playing Lady Macbeth. Upon which I was assured by one of the inhabitants that her Ladyship walked every night at the Castle of Dunsinaine dressed in white satin.”

So in white satin sure enough Lady Macbeth did appear, and in Glasgow. Mrs Bellamy goes on to speak in the highest terms of the hospitality and kindness she experienced during her sojourn there ; every one seemingly striving to show their appreciation of her talents.

The race week in Edinburgh was always a “draw,” and with the attraction of Mrs Bellamy the management justly considered they might expect an increase of business during their usual brief but lucrative autumn season. So with proper enterprise they set about getting the house put in good order. The announcement of this reads as follows :—* “The inside of the Theatre in Canongate is now painting and decorating against the races. The orchestra is enlarged and a fine Harpsichord added to the band of music. Some new comedians are expected from England to appear in the five select plays advertised. We hear that the Burlesque Opera of the *Dragon of Wantley*, composed by the late ingenious Mr Lampe, and not exhibited here these twelve years, will be reviv’d in the race week.”

The Theatre opened on Saturday, September 4th, with the *Provok’d Husband*. Digges seemingly had tired of booking seats through the day and acting at night as well ; for we find a note at the foot of the advertisement stating that a “box book is opened by the clerk of the theatre.” Upon September 4th the name of Bellamy appears for the first time upon the bills,† not only Mrs, but Mr as well. Digges had, in fact, changed his name, for that of his lady. “For family reasons,” we read in the *Courant* of that date, “a gentleman of the theatre has been obliged to alter his name in the public bills.” Mrs Bellamy in her memoirs gives a somewhat roundabout reason for this change, alleging that Digges’ mother had died and left him

* *Courant*, 25th August 1762.

† During the Spring it had been “a Gentlewoman,” &c.

property on condition that his name never again appeared in a play-bill. His mother did leave him £4000; but not for two years afterwards, and on condition that he never acted again. Digges kept the condition till the legacy was spent, and then gravitated back to his old profession. Tate Wilkinson's explanation of the change of name, although bluntly expressed, is perhaps correct; he says:—"As living together in Scotland constitutes a marriage while in that kingdom, he most graciously exchanged the name of Digges for Bellamy." Digges certainly was no marrying man, although it really does seem that Bellamy, with all her faults, desired a legal union with her lover. Lee Lewis* records that when she urged him upon that subject, his reply was, "Madam, I give you leave to treat me like a foot-pad, rob me and let me go, but don't tie me neck and heels."

During the present summer Digges hired a house in Bonnington, which was then a pleasantly situated village quite in the country. How Digges and Bellamy managed to get home at night after the play was over, is certainly difficult to understand. No doubt it would be in chairs, but as these would have to pass down the Horse Wynd, and through what is now called the Lower Calton into Leith Walk, then a mere country road, to Pilrig Street, which was little more than a rough cart track, the journey cannot have been altogether pleasant—especially when we bear in mind that there were no lamps, and that the chance of meeting foot-pads was not remote. Within their Bonnington residence the twain kept up a great style, continuing their joint course of extravagance to the furthest limit; nevertheless they did not find their life made up of unmixed enjoyment. One dispute they had ran so high, that although it was then midnight, and in the winter season, Digges began, in a violent rage, to take off his clothes, with the intention of drowning himself in a pond contiguous to their lodgings. Mrs Bellamy surveyed the operation with the utmost calmness, and when he had run out of the house, arose from her seat with the same *nonchalance*, and fastened the street door. The rigour of the season, along with a little reflection, soon cooled the violence of his resolution. On his return, a capitulation took place before entrance was granted him. His teeth chattering in his head with the cold, he was obliged to submit to the severest terms the lady in possession of the fortress thought fit to propose; after which he was permitted to enter, and an act of general amnesty was issued for that time.†

* Memoirs, vol. iii. p. 47.

† Love Letters, by Digges and Ward, 1833.

On September 11th, *Macbeth*, "as written by Shakspeare," was performed, "with all the original songs and dances." The following letter, published at this time, shows that the stage was rapidly creating a wider and more spontaneous interest:—

"To the Managers of the Theatre.*

"SIR,—The remarkable decency with which the stage is at present conducted, and the late addition to your company of some people of acknowledged merit, have entitled you to the sincere good will and regard of the public. This, I think, you must be conscious of, not only by the applause with which you are always received, but also by the crowds that eagerly frequent your house. But, Sir, give a spectator leave to ask you, why, when you have so very capital an actress now on your stage, you chuse to neglect gratifying the audience of this city with a tragedy which never failed drawing full houses, and receiving uncommon applause, I mean the favourite tragedy of *Douglas*. You were the original in the character of the young man in that excellent piece, and as we must certainly see a Lady Randolph excellently played, let me hope you will oblige many of your friends, and in particular,—Yours, 'CRITO.'

The hint was not thrown away, if indeed the letter was not a managerial puff in advance, for Home's tragedy was performed on the 15th September, with Mrs Bellamy, for the first time, as Lady Randolph; Old Shepherd = Mr Granger; Glenalvon = Mr Griffith; Lord Randolph = Mr Aicken; and Douglas = Mr Bellamy. A note on the bills says that "the music and dresses will all be Scotch." The performance proved a great success, and the short autumn season closed on September 18th with *Rule a Wife and Have a Wife*.

A scratch performance was given at the theatre on the 23rd, "for the benefit of an officer's widow and five children, who died at the taking of Havanah,"† after which the theatre remained closed till November 10th, when the winter season of 1762-63 commenced. The first piece played was the *Beggars' Opera*, in which Digges (*alias* Bellamy) gave his well-known impersonation of Captain Macheath, regarding which O'Keefe said—"Digges was the best Macheath I ever saw in person, song, and manner."

The *Courant* of January 15th, 1763 (Saturday), announces that, "as her Majesty's birthday is on Tuesday next week, the days of playing will be Monday, Wednesday, Thursday, and Saturday.

On the 25th, Mrs Bellamy played Jane Shore for the first time here, and on February 2nd, Lady Brumpton in *The Funeral, or Grief a la Mode*, also for the first time in Edinburgh. February 24th, Mrs Bellamy's benefit—*The Revenge*, and last two acts of *The Orators*, by Foote. March

* *Courant*, September 8th.

† *Courant*.

2nd, *Beggars' Opera*, by desire of the "Queen of the Hunters." Captain Macheath = Bellamy ; Lucy = Mrs Pye, her first appearance on this stage. In the *Courant* of the same day, "We hear that Mr Kennedy, who was so much admired for his performances at the Theatre Royal, Drury Lane, is to make his first appearance here as Daniel in the *Conscious Lovers*, and speak the Epilogue, 'Bucks have at ye all,' for the benefit of Mrs Kennedy." Mrs Kennedy had been a member of the company all the season.

In the beginning of the month of March, Mr De la Cour, the scenic artist, considered himself sufficiently aggrieved to make public a complaint against the "managers," not only for having underpaid him for his work, but for taking on a new man to supplant him. The following are his own words, and they afford us some interesting details regarding the size of the stage and other matters :—

"Mr De la Cour to the Public.*

"As the managers of the theatre, in order to prejudice me, do now employ another to paint their decorations for both here and Glasgow, spreading about that I have been too dear, the only remedie I could think of to expose this false report and undeceive the public, was by giving an account of my prices, as also in what manner I have been paid. For the front scenes, such as towns, chambers, forests, &c., of fifteen feet square each, never above £7, 7s. ; for the wings, £1, 1s. ; and so in proportion for the rest, though those I did for Newcastle were still cheaper. As I received the payment of above only by benefits, the managers, instead of being losers, must have considerably gained, because they were always on such nights as the charges of the house could not otherwise have been cleared. Last year, for instance, they gave me Monday, February 1st, as this was a fast day of the Church of England. Had it not been for the goodness of my friends, I could not have defrayed expenses, which amounted to £22. †

W. DE LA COUR."

The audiences of this period, and indeed those for many years after, were very different in composition to the miscellaneous crowds that in these latter days swarm to the theatre. The "audience" long ago, not only in a small town like Edinburgh, where it might almost be said every one knew every one else, but even in London, was much in the nature of a definite body composed of definite units. The element of chance entered but rarely into it ; in fact, a general rule might be laid down that *occasional* theatre-goers never turned out save upon some extraordinary excitement or attraction, such as the *Douglas* production, or Mrs Bellamy's first appearance. It would be safe to say, that at other times a strange face

* *Courant*, March 5th.

† Considering the house only held about £60, this charge was quite as high in proportion as any of the London theatres at the time.

in pit or boxes—especially the former—was but a rare occurrence. This does not imply that identically the same persons went night after night to the playhouse; but there were a certain number of regular playgoers—who probably might each of them average *at least* one night a week in the theatre. This, with four acting nights a week, and counting the house at £65 as a maximum hold (£50 for boxes and pit, and £15 for gallery), would require four audiences of about 600 people each, or 2,400 individuals in all, who were regular playgoers in Edinburgh. In all probability this is considerably above the actual number. No doubt the majority of the regular piddites frequented the theatre oftener than once a week, so perhaps somewhere between two and three audiences might more nearly represent the true state of matters. It is not necessary in the present work to dilate further on this subject, interesting as it is, and although it undoubtedly opens up a plentiful harvest of thought regarding the influence a body so compact and united in sympathies must have exercised. Indeed, we see proofs of it constantly in the history of all theatres during the last century and the early years of the present. Woe betide the luckless manager who offended this wayward and jealous monster. Now-a-days the public take no more trouble to show their dislike or disapprobation of a house, or manager, or company, than to stay away from the play. Then it was quite different, as the cases of Sheridan in Dublin, Beat in Edinburgh,* and Kemble in Covent Garden, well testify. To show the family nature of the audience at this time, and in particular the large infusion of the “law” element that entered into its composition, it is interesting to read the following announcement:—

“As a ball is given by the Faculty of Advocates on Monday next, the play of *Henry IV.*, in which Mr Bellamy is to appear for the first time in the character of Sir John Falstaff, for the benefit of Mrs Mozeen, is therefore deferred to the next day, Tuesday.”

Bellamy's impersonation of the unctuous knight was evidently a success, as it was redemanded, and consequently repeated on April 9th, and again on July 20th. In the beginning of May, the season, which had been very successful, was evidently showing signs of waning, or at least the audiences were falling off, so the days of playing were reduced to three, namely, Tuesday, Thursday, and Saturday.

* See 1767.

On May 17th, *King Lear* and the pantomime of *Pygmalion* were produced, in the latter of which was introduced the "surprising escape of harlequin into a quart bottle," evidently a burlesque of the remarkable fraud that was perpetrated at the Haymarket Theatre, London, in 1749. On June 14th Digges performed Othello for the first time, and a few days afterwards the following most interesting announcement appeared :—*

"THEATRE.

"The managers, desirous to gratify the town with every new entertainment which comes within the compass of their abilities, have the pleasure of informing the public that they have prevailed on some eminent performers of the

ITALIAN BURLETTA,

OR,

COMIC OPERA,

To visit the metropolis for a short time. The band of music will consist of the very best hands the managers can procure, and the orchestra enlarged accordingly. The first representation will be, of that universally admired composition, called

LA SERVA PADRONA,

OR,

THE MAID THE MISTRESS.

"Tickets are printed for the occasion, and although the expenses are large, yet to gratify that curiosity which must arise, in regard to a performance never before exhibited in this country, the entertainments will be only at the *common price*.

"Books, in which the opera is translated into English, will be sold at the doors of the house. The above burletta will be performed on Tuesday next, 21st inst. The overture to strike up exactly at seven o'clock. No person on any account can be admitted behind the scenes."

The preparations for this engagement were most extensive; in particular the orchestra was much strengthened, and for the time was conducted by Signor Arigoni. The *Courant*† gives the following notice of the performance :—

"On Tuesday evening was performed at the theatre the famous burletta of Pergolesi, called *La Serva Padrona*, to a most crowded and polite audience. The band of music was the finest ever heard there, and the whole entertainment gave universal delight and satisfaction. The action of Signor Gurrini, who played the part of the old man, was particularly excellent, and Signora Gurrini, who played the part of the maidservant, sung several songs with uncommon approbation; the duets, in particular, were remarkably fine, and the last, where humour and harmony were so happily blended, was encored, and repeated to the general applause of every person. The overtures were admirably performed. Signor Arrigoni conducted the band, and Signor Santo Lapis played the harpsichord. It was allowed by the best judges that no musical entertainment could be better executed."

* *Courant*, June 18th.

† June 22nd.

The opera was repeated on the 23rd, with the *Intriguing Chambermaid*, in which Digges made his first appearance as the Drunken Colonel, and Mrs Kennedy her first appearance as Lettice.

Other operas performed were as follows :—On June 27th, *Il Giocatore, or the Gamester*, by Carbonini of Genoa, with three grand overtures : the 1st, by the Earl of Kelly ; the 2nd, by Jommelli ; the 3rd, by Mr Abel. On July 11th, *Fracollo* ; and July 20th, *L'Uccellatrice*, or the *Female Bird Catcher*, by Signior Jumelli.* And on the 30th July, the season closed with *Romeo and Juliet*.

It may be noted here, although not strictly connected with the history of the playhouse, that on July 20th, the first proposal for the building of the North Bridge was made public. There is strong evidence that, for several years prior to this, with the steady growth of commerce and the progress of all peaceful arts, an ever growing desire had sprung up among the citizens for modes of living more congenial to cleanliness and comfort,—not to mention health. Indeed, the wonder is that our forefathers, in an age very far from wanting in refinement and certainly replete with accomplishment, could put up with the fearfully insanitary and cooped up life that the piles of “flats” and narrow closes rendered unavoidable. The first symptom of the desire for more room, air, and convenience, was the construction a few years previous to this of New Street, nearly opposite the Playhouse. The experiment was a great success, and the town, which till then had possessed only two thoroughfares broad enough to be termed streets, namely, the High Street (and Canongate) and Cowgate (including Grassmarket), began immediately to undergo that transformation which, still going on, bids fair shortly to obliterate every vestige of the “good town” that was.

On November 19th 1763,† it was announced that the theatre was repairing and “ornamenting,” with a complete set of new scenery, and that a few Subscription Tickets for the season were ready to be had at the Old Coffee House, at the office in the area of the theatre, or of Mr Beat, at his house in Monteith’s Close. And, in a few days after, Mrs Bellamy’s third (and last) season opened in Edinburgh.

A new play by a “Scotch Gentleman,” and entitled, *She’s Not Him and He Is Not Her*, was produced on February 6th, and on the 11th the *Careless Husband*, with the following cast :—Lady Betty = Mrs Bellamy ;

* So spelt in the advertisement.

† *Courant*.

Sir Charles = Aickin ; Lord Foppington = Creswick ; Lord Morelove = Bridges, his third appearance on this stage ; Lady Easy = Mrs Mozeen ; Lady Graveairs = Mrs Pye ; Edging = Miss Wooley.

As before stated, Digges and his lady continued their old ways of extravagance, and as was the inevitable result, the tradesmen who had given them credit became clamorous towards the close of the season for a settlement of their accounts. Mrs Bellamy, who at times shewed much tact, contrived a plan that took her worthy partner out of the reach of his creditors, and at the same time did not interfere with the success of the season at the theatre. This was suggested by the arrival, in February, of Mr Tate Wilkinson, a gentleman who was perhaps the most versatile actor of his day, and to whom succeeding generations of dramatic antiquarians owe a great debt for the interesting and almost invariably correct * biographies, scraps of theatrical history and anecdote, that he has incorporated in his several publications. He was of a somewhat remarkable character, and in his younger days had a most erratic and bohemian disposition. Nevertheless, through being possessed of shrewdness and insight into human nature, he contrived to succeed both as an actor and, in his later days, as manager of York Circuit. † His first engagement was at Drury Lane, where, however, he offended Garrick by mimicking that great but touchy individual. Foote he offended in a similar manner. Garrick did his best to spoil Wilkinson's chance of success by putting him on in parts that did not suit him ; but it would not do, and Wilkinson, chiefly by his clever imitations, made a considerable name. In Dublin he was a great favourite, and was sent there on one occasion by Garrick to hurt Woodward and Barry of the Crow Street Theatre, by "taking off" these gentlemen in the theatre in Smock Alley. Wilkinson, with much policy, saw it would be a mistake to make enemies of two such potent magnates, and kept his mimetic powers in a safer channel.

He had been acting in Dublin with Barry during the first portion of the present season, and might indeed have continued there till its close, but that his wandering spirit wanted change, so with no other object he journeyed to Scotland, and arrived in Edinburgh as stated. The account of what happened upon his arrival will be best given in his own words :—‡

* Fitz Gerald's statement, that Wilkinson's books are a "mass of truth, blunder, and falsehoods," notwithstanding.

† He also rented the Edinburgh Theatre ; see anon.

‡ Memoirs of Tate Wilkinson, vol. iii. p. 42.

“Edinburgh is romantically and pleasantly situated ; indeed, more so than can be imagined or described. The new streets, hotels, superb squares, &c., are astonishing ; but, added to all those elegancies, in the winter season, the town is well lighted throughout. This description will make a narrow-minded cockney stare who thinks green peas were never seen in Scotland, and supposes all the inhabitants live on barley broth, haggis, and crowdy. In point of elegance and spirit, there is no such city in the kingdom of Great Britain, except London and Bath. But, reader, observe, Edinburgh was not in this state when I first arrived there in February 1764. It was then merely confined to the old town, and destitute of many of those elegancies it now possesses. On my setting down at Edinburgh I neither had engagement nor acquaintance with any person whatever, theatrical or otherwise, but had gone there at hap hazard, and removed myself four hundred miles from London into a strange country, and took that wonderful circumbendibus to North Britain uninvited, merely from my own whim and inclination :—but on enquiry was highly pleased to find my old friend Mrs Bellamy was there, with whom I had not only dined at Mr Calcraft’s when she lived in Parliament Street, but had been on an intimacy for years by seeing her constantly as a visitor at Lady Tyrawley’s at Somerset House. I was no sooner announced in Scotland than most friendly received, and a general *insisted* invitation to make a home of her house and Mr Bellamy’s (*alias* Digges), at Bonnington, during my stay at Edinburgh : It is a pleasant village situated little more than a mile from the town, but now I dare say nearly connected by the additional streets and buildings. Mr Digges was certainly the most polite gentleman in the world to his ladies, and not choosing to have Mrs Digges’ name in the bills (for living together in Scotland constitutes a marriage while in that kingdom) he most graciously exchanged his name of Digges for Bellamy ; also, let that lady perform whatever character she would, she was always placed at the head of the bill, as for instance :—‘ This day *Romeo and Juliet* ; *Juliet*=Mrs Bellamy ; *Romeo*=Mr Bellamy. On being introduced into the green room I met with little neat Mrs Mozeen, my Portsmouth Desdemona, 1758, who by the name of Edwards had been bred carefully up, and introduced to the London audience by Mrs Clive, who was so partial to her adoption, that she for the first time gave up Polly, which she would not do to Mrs Cibber, and acted Lucy, (which was beyond compare) on producing her own taught Polly ; but Mrs Mozeen’s powers were weak, and she fell by tasting the apple like her mother Eve, and the chaste, the comical, the enraged Clive discarded her, and resumed Polly herself, and let her pupil down the wind to prey on Fortune. Mrs Mozeen was at Edinburgh, 1764, under the wings of a long tall Northumberland manager of Edinburgh whose name was *Dawson*, conjointly with a Mr Bates. Edinburgh Dawson had, like a true *lover*, sacrificed all his business and good situation at Newcastle, to prostrate himself with offerings of incense and gaudy mock trapping of false silver and gold lace at the feet of his theatrical Princess, which at last ended in his wilful ruin. Mrs Mozeen had a plurality of lovers and always put me in mind of Shakspeare’s lines,—

‘ Behold yon simpering lady, she who starts at
Pleasure’s name, and thinks her ear prophaned with
The least wanton word ; wou’d you believe it ? ’ &c.

“A Miss Wordly also was there, whom Mrs Bellamy has mentioned in her apology as being termed the Goddess of Nonsense, as a compliment to her being remarkably the contrary ; but there my friend Bellamy forgot herself, for she was so called by acting that part for my benefit in a farce of Fielding’s, entitled *The Pleasures of the Town*, and was so christened by Mr Aickin, who was then in Edinburgh, in high and deserved estimation, and with whom

I had the satisfaction of *many, many* happy days, or rather evenings (not omitting our Scotch pint of claret, and neither of us averse to Madeira—to the latter I then and now give the preference), particularly recollecting one hour's laugh with him on my nearly breaking my neck by a fall into the coal cellar. The third day of my being in Edinburgh I had a card of invitation from Mr Dowson and Mr David Bates, to sup with them at a tavern. I was entertained very respectably: and in the course of casual conversation Mr Dowson (who was the monied manager just then) asked me what terms I required for eight or ten nights? said, they could not afford anything extravagant, as I had come uninvited (which should never be done), and at the prime part of the season, when they wanted not any foreign aid. Besides, Mr Dowson said (and with truth) Mr and Mrs Bellamy were towers of strength. The Scotch managers and I parted very civilly, but no hint of terms for an engagement on either side. The day following, at dinner with Mr Digges, I informed him and his lady what had passed, and that it had determined me to quit Scotland immediately. Mrs Bellamy replied, that what the managers had told me was the exact state of facts as they then stood. 'And,' said she, 'as Mr Bellamy and myself are concerned in the *profits* in one interest; and as we settle all the plays, we do not want you, Mr Wilkinson, as it is evident you have thrown yourself into their power if you play at all; and if not, you have no alternative but to depart and make better use of your time, as you certainly can; for Bates and Dowson undoubtedly think, as you are on the spot, you will not neglect any decent engagement. But my friend Tate,' continued she, 'you are sure I wish you well, from my long knowledge of you, and if you will for once depend on my advice and stay over Saturday and Monday next, a wonderful change may happen in the movements of the theatrical machine that will astonish Bates and Dowson, and you may command your own terms: at present they are sure they can do without you, but Sunday next will cause a contrary opinion.' I was much surprised, and begged Mrs Bellamy to be explicit. 'Why,' said she, 'Tate, I will prove myself explicit and honourable to you, as I can rely on your secrecy. There is a law in force in Scotland, that if any person whatever is in debt, and known to be quitting the kingdom, they can arrest, even on a Sunday, on oath being first made. Mr Digges is much involved here, and is so unfortunately circumstanced at this juncture, that he cannot possibly continue longer, without loss of liberty. On Saturday night Mr Digges will, on some pretext, get all the cash he can from Mr Still, the treasurer. Dowson is not destitute of property and must pay the actors. Mr Digges will by Sunday night be secretly and securely conveyed out of their reach, and safe on the other side of the Tweed, in Old England. On Monday Bates and Dowson will be in the utmost consternation, and their only relief will be that of requesting your assistance.' The event turned out exactly as Mrs Bellamy's secret advice had painted; and on the prophesied Monday they were obliged to offer me, unasked, two clear benefits, who a week before would not have given one without the charges being duly paid into their coffers instead of my purse.

"The *Minor* was first resolved on; next, the *Mayor of Garratt*; both were quite new. Mrs Cole was thought rather improper, also Dr Squintum, as touching on matters then judged too serious;—but I was very fashionable, and all was right; but Major Sturgeon was the favourite. I acted in various plays and farces, from Richard, Bayes, &c., to the Liar; in short, I played many good parts, and was received with candour and much approbation. Mrs Bellamy had two benefits, and both much honoured in the compliments they paid her on those nights.

"I was soon well acquainted with several leading gentlemen, particularly with Mr

Nicholson *Sweetart* (*sic*), who was then universally known, and as well remembered from London to Edinburgh, and at every public place of resort, as any worthy spirited gentleman can be, and in consequence respected in the three kingdoms. . . . I was not only satisfied, but even delighted with my expedition to canny Edinburgh. . . . The season ended; Mrs Bellamy wished me to proceed on an expedition then forming for a new theatre at Glasgow just finished, but I at that time was in a bad state of health and therefore declined it."

Mrs Bellamy in her *Memoirs** mentions Wilkinson:—

"To sum up," she says, "the whole of his character in a few words, he has always been justly admired as an actor, beloved as a man, and esteemed as a friend. His person is tall, his countenance rather sportive than beautiful, and his manner agreeable. As to his theatrical talents, they are far above the common rank; he has infinite merit in comedy and excels in mimicry."

A curious story is also related by her, that Mr Wilkinson, stopping at a wayside inn on his road from Glasgow to Edinburgh, had requested to be served with dinner; the landlord however informed him that the famous Mr Wilkinson, the actor, was then in the house, and that till he had been served no one else could have anything. Wilkinson, naturally astonished at such a piece of information, said he was personally acquainted with Mr Wilkinson, and desired to speak with him. Accordingly he was ushered into the room, where he found a broken-down actor of the name of Chalmers from the Norwich Company, who, having no money, had taken this somewhat novel method of raising credit. Wilkinson, perhaps in need of company and a laugh, dined with his *alter ego*, and had to pay the bill for both. Chalmers left to travel the road Wilkinson had come, and so probably at his next stopping-place did not receive so cordial a reception as he had had in his progress up to this meeting with the real man!

Wilkinson's actual first performance in Edinburgh was on February 13th, as Foote, Shift, Smirk, Mrs Cole, and the Epilogue, in *The Minor*. On the 18th he played Trim in *The Funeral*, introducing the Cries of London. *The Mayor of Garratt* was acted for the first time in Edinburgh on the 20th.

Mrs Bellamy took a benefit on March 12th, when, to prevent confusion at the doors, ladies were requested to send servants to keep their places not later than four o'clock. Boxes, Pit, and Gallery, 2s. 6d. Wilkinson took his benefit on April 14th, when *King Lear* was played. "Between the play and farce a variety of entertainments, particularly by Mr Wilkinson, who will treat the ladies and gentlemen with a dish of all sorts; the bill of fare consisting of whim and novelty, Mr Thurot's trip to

* Vol. vi. p. 43.

Carrickfergus, and a new comic medley, or MUM MUM MUM, written by Mr Garrick."

On June 30th, *The Miser*. Lovegold = Stamper; Frederick = Aickin; Clèrimont = M'George; Ramilie = Collins; List = Lancashire; Mariana = Mrs Pye; Harriet = Miss Worley; Lappet = Mrs Mozeen; with an occasional epilogue by Mrs Bellamy. This was the last time she was advertised to appear in Edinburgh.

Sometime in July Mr Sheridan arrived in town, and gave readings at the meeting-house in Skinner's Close, and on Wednesday, 25th July, "at the request of several persons of distinction," he performed Hamlet at the theatre. He also performed Richard III. (July 28th), and Cato, August 8th.* Mrs Bellamy, however, had severed her connection with the theatre before this. In fact, according to her own statement, she left on account of Mr Sheridan being engaged, but she makes a mistake in her Memoirs in stating this to have happened after she returned from Glasgow, as it was before she went there, and before the season in Edinburgh had closed. The following announcement from the *Courant* of July 25th fully confirms this:—"As Mrs Bellamy is not to appear any more on the Edinburgh stage, she begs leave to return her thanks to the public in general, and to those friends who have done her the honour to patronise her in particular, for the favours she has received during her residence in Scotland, of which she will ever retain the most grateful sense." Why the engagement of Mr Sheridan should make her take so decisive a step is not clear; perhaps Edinburgh had become too "warm" for her; at all events, she went to Glasgow, and according to her own account, returned to Edinburgh before finally leaving for the south. In her Memoirs, she says David Hume offered her his lodgings. The Bonnington house having been sold off by the creditors, she took a "small English house in New Street." She then quotes the above advertisement, and says she inserted it in the newspapers every day for a month, a statement as purely fictional as a final sentence she adds to it in the shape of a N.B.—"All persons who have any legal demand upon Mrs Bellamy, are requested to deliver in their accounts at her house, opposite Lord Milton's in the Canongate, within one month of this date, in order to receive the same." Such a N.B. never appeared until she wrote her Memoirs. And so this beautiful, clever, but foolish woman passed from the scene, and her name was heard no more in Edinburgh save in the law courts.

* The season closed 22nd August.

CHAPTER X.

CANONGATE CONCERT HALL, 1764-5 TO 1767, AND CANONGATE THEATRE ROYAL, 1767-1769.



MESSRS Beat and Dawson, perhaps because they found the difficulties of forming a company without Digges' assistance to be too much for them, did not make a start the following season until the 29th of December, when the play of *The Miser* was performed. On January 7th, 1765, the following announcement appeared :—* “As a report has industriously been spread by the enemies of the theatre, that it was in a hazardous and crazy condition, the managers thought it their duty, for the satisfaction of the public, to apply for a visitation of the Dean of Guild Court, who, on the 19th ult., narrowly inspected the said theatre, and found the same, as by their said report, in every respect perfectly sufficient. The persons who visited the theatre were the Lord Dean of Guild, Messieurs James Robertson, Patrick Jamieson, mason ; George Syme, sclater ; John Young, wright ; William Dallas, wright.”

Thomas and Sally, by Dr Arne, was produced for the first time on January 19th, and *The Gamester* on February 9th. But the season showed no signs of paying ; so Dawson and Beat were compelled to make overtures to Mr Wilkinson, who, after playing with Foote at the Haymarket during the preceding summer, had wandered as far away as Exeter. His own account of this, his second season in Edinburgh, is well worth insertion.

† “Before I finished at Exeter, I had the most pressing invitations repeatedly from Messrs Dowson and Bates at Edinburgh, intimating they could not go on without my immediate assistance. A pretty little trip at the end of January from Exeter to Edinburgh ! However, preliminaries were soon settled, and I proceeded to London, where I rested only two or three

* *Courant*.

† *Memoirs*, vol. iii. p. 258.

days and posted down for the north. Mr Dowson was purposely come to Newcastle, to treat me from thence post to Edinburgh ; we only continued one day. We got safe to the capital of Scotland the first week in February 1765. The theatre had sustained the loss of Mr Digges and Mrs Bellamy ; the only true support was Mr Aickin. There was, it is true, a Mr Stamper, who had been a great favourite, but he had grown quite inebriated, and that from *morning* drinking. The company was much the same, except Mr Stamper, Mr Creswick, a Mr Parker, and Mrs Pye from Ireland, also Mr and Mrs M'George.* We went on tolerably till *Richard III.* was acted,† a character at Edinburgh I was always particularly well received in, and with more than common applause ; but during the summer session in 1764, Mr Sheridan had engaged for a certain number of nights, and on one of those nights had acted Richard, at which time the want of a young gentleman or lady to supply the part of Prince Edward rendered it impracticable to have the play acted, unless Mrs Mozeen, whose figure was neat and youthful, though bordering at that time on the vale of years, would quit petticoat hopes, in Lady Anne, of royal coronation, and assume the young monarch in expectation of the same honours. But in the winter, Mrs Wheeler's daughters, who promised remarkably well on the stage, supplied the children's parts very ably. Mrs Mozeen expected her Lady Anne as her stock part, and no supposition could be well grounded for Mrs M'George taking offence at it ; for though she had played Lady Anne with Mr Sheridan in the summer season, she must have known it was necessity and good nature in Mrs Mozeen to have resigned Lady Anne for Prince Edward on a matter of emergency, which obstacle being removed, and the children provided for the royal stock, she had double claim for former rights. But on the night *Richard III.* was acted, in the scene where Mrs Mozeen in Lady Anne made her appearance, a general uproar ensued, aye even to the pelting of the lady ; the collegians, one and all, having formed a severe party at the malevolent misrepresentations instigated by Mr and Mrs M'George, whose wrongs were related with double force to the town, as being cruelly deprived of Lady Anne, a character in which she had been received with so much praiseworthy applause. Mrs M'George intended to have produced another Lady Anne to the wondering audience to lament a husband, but Manager Dowson having been alarmed by authenticated intelligence that mischief was brewing, barricaded the entrances and kept them double guarded by doorkeepers, to prevent Roxana with her dagger from gaining admittance behind the scenes, and thereby wounding the bosom of his beloved Statira. It was an hour before the uproar ceased ; but Mrs Mozeen evinced if she had little body she had a great soul. The audience were very attentive, and honoured me much that evening in every scene, except where Lady Anne made her appearance, and then marks of rage, indignation, and contempt ensued. The riot did not subside with that night, but lasted above a fortnight, and was carried to such extremes that not any ladies visited the theatre from apprehension of disturbances and outrage. Manager Dowson, who paid adoration to his beloved Statira, even equal to the poet's fancy, levelled all his fury on her desperate foe Mrs M'George, by an immediate dismissal, which stroke of sudden impolicy at that juncture only served to enrage the more.

“Dowson, still faithful to his mistress, rather than Mrs M'George's party should have reigned triumphant, I verily believe would have taken a torch at noon and set our famed Persepolis on fire ; but the fates did what the manager could not, for though the collegians gave ammunition and manual assistance in Mrs M'George's defence, yet they did not (or

* What Wilkinson means by this it is difficult to understand.

† 18th February.

could not) afford to offer their purses ; therefore, as provisions grew scanty, that tragic queen thought it more prudent and better generalship to retreat than be starved by attacking a fortress she found determined on obstinate defence, so off she and her spouse went ; and peace and harmony were once more restored."

Wilkinson's first benefit was on March 21st,* when *Rival Queens* or "*The Death of Alexander the Great*, with the triumphal entry of Alexander into Babylon, and a grand chorus;" and *Harlequin Soldier*, taken from Allan Ramsay's tale of the "Miller and Moon."† His second benefit was on April 13th, when there was played, in addition to *Coriolanus*, a new burlesque tragedy of two acts (never acted before), called the *Death of Bucephalus*, being a parody "written by a person of fashion," the performances "to conclude with a funeral procession, accompanied by a solemn dirge."‡ This was the last night of acting, and the company, along with Wilkinson, proceeded to Glasgow, where, that gentleman relates, he was received with the same cordiality and friendship as he had been in Edinburgh.

Wilkinson's lodging while in Edinburgh was at the first house within the head of St Mary's Wynd.

The following winter season, which opened on November 2nd, 1765, with *The Orphan*, in which Mr Young from Drury Lane played Chamont, was most uneventful. Besides the usual popular pieces of the time (which be it noted included a large percentage of Shakspeare's works), there was performed Ben Jonson's *Every Man in his Humour*, which took sufficiently well to call for a repetition, *Love in a Village*, *Thomas and Sally*, and *The Mayor of Garratt*, all of which were great favourites. Mr Aickin had his benefit on March 3rd, when the performance of *Romeo and Juliet* called forth the following curious announcement :—
§ "We hear that Mrs Baker, although she never played Juliet before, and is fully conscious of the impropriety of her figure for that character, has consented to do it on Monday for Mr Aickin's Benefit, and hopes the audience will accept of her performing it in the best manner she is able."

During this season we get one of those curious side lights into the

* This date is given by Wilkinson himself as 22nd, and so it was originally advertised, but it was altered. Probably Wilkinson copied 22nd from one of the bills that had been first issued.—Memoirs, iv. 6.

† This piece Wilkinson says was taken from the French by Mr Shaignean of Dublin.—Memoirs, iv. 6.

‡ The piece was a burlesque of the *Death of Alexander* mentioned above.

§ *Courant*.

internal economy of the theatre which constitute so interesting a feature in its history. In this instance it consists of a pamphlet, now of extreme rarity, which came out under the title of "A Letter from a Gentleman in Edinburgh to his Friend in the Country, occasioned by the late Theatrical Disturbances." The author, besides dealing with the state of the theatre, and the merits (or demerits) of the company, records some most curious bickerings between management and audience. After stating pretty roundly that the managers were "ignorant, confident, and insolent," he goes on to speak of the stupidity of these gentlemen in casting plays in a manner that nowise suited the members of the company, putting, for instance, a light comedian to play heavy parts, a tragedian to play low comedy, and so on. Then he says,—

"Stayley is undoubtedly the best performer we *now* have,* and on any theatre must make a respectable appearance. His voice, his person, his action, command attention, and gratify expectation. But, can you believe it, though such a person is well calculated by his merit, when known, to fill a house, and one would therefore imagine ought to be encouraged for the manager's advantage, yet he seldom appears in a playbill at all; and when he does, oftener in a despicable part, than in a capital one.† *Cloten, Friar Lawrence*, with twenty such trifling characters, they allot him, while an Aickin, a Tindal, and a Young, attempt the highest; but who are no more to be compared to Stayley as actors, than 'I to Hercules.' I will not dispute, however, but these three may play each in their turn principal parts with applause, provided they are given them judiciously. But the case is not so; for what parts they do play are commonly (take notice, I do not say altogether) so absurdly adapted, that I have often thought the managers wanted to see how far they could provoke the audience without their resenting it."

It would seem that even after the parts had been badly cast and the names printed, they were often altered at the last moment without any apology given to the audience. "Didier," the anonymous writer continues, "attempts to play almost contrary to the decree of God and nature, for his voice, person, his action, are all against him." He resembled, it seems, a "spread eagle painted on a sign post." Again, Stamper and Lancashire, both noted low comedians, were made to appear in tragedy, though it was "as ridiculous to see these two play tragedy, as it would be for one of our reverend clergymen to perform in a pantomime entertainment." "The female characters," the pamphlet continues, "are

* Not quite Jackson's opinion, but more likely to be near the truth.

† This is very interesting when read in connection with what follows next season

distributed in the same manner with those of the men. Mrs Baker is turned out to make way for Mrs Bland Hamilton, an actress that, however she might formerly excel Mrs Baker, is infinitely her inferior now. She has lost her voice, her looks, her teeth, and is deformed in her person.”* Mrs Robson, it would seem, had been introduced to the prejudice of Mrs Didier, a woman superior to her in every way. What is pointed out as an even more serious grievance, is the laxity of discipline, which eventually extended to the almost entire abandonment of rehearsals. The public, after putting up with several cases of discreditable performances, at length took exception to the omission of a hornpipe, which was advertised to be danced between the acts of the *Beggars' Opera*. The demand to have it given being reluctantly complied with, Mr Beat took an opportunity of taking a Mr Home, who had been the leading spirit in insisting on the hornpipe being given, to task for his conduct in the matter. Home complained of this to the audience; but as he had an uncouth way of telling his story, he was for some time only laughed at by the pit. Perseverance, however, won him a hearing, upon which the performance was stopped, and Beat's appearance demanded. That gentleman, however, chose to absent himself, and Dawson, instead of soothing matters with a conciliatory speech from the stage, foolishly attempted to address the house from the back of the pit with his hat on! This only inflamed the malcontents more, and after hustling the foolish manager about, the pit resolved that the performance should finish, when, if Beat refused to appear, they would proceed to violent measures. The play therefore was finished, and the ladies allowed to depart, when, Beat still refusing to apologise, the audience set about tearing up seats, sconces, scenes, boxes, and whatever came within their reach. Evidently this quarrel was soon patched up, and the house again reopened.

The *Courant* of Monday, March 17th, contains the following announcement, which is peculiarly sad when taken in connection with Wilkinson's remark quoted on page 133:—“Mr Francis Stamper, who performed in the tragedy of *Macbeth* last Wednesday night, died about two o'clock

* It is really impossible to say whether this refers to the Mrs Hamilton who had been so long connected with the Edinburgh stage, or to Mrs Bland or Hamilton, who had acted with great success for many years under Rich at Covent Garden. The two Mrs Hamiltons are totally distinct individuals, but it is possible that Mrs Bland Hamilton may have been in Edinburgh this season, and returned the following season under the name of Mrs Sweeney.

on Saturday afternoon, and was interred this evening in the Canongate Churchyard."

EPITAPH BY MR STAYLEY.

"Is Stamper dead? He is!—to all below.
Look in each face—you'll read it in their woe!
He who was wont to raise the general smile,
And for whole nights a world of care beguile:
(Oh sudden change!)—whence comes it, Stamper, now,
You fix such gloomy sorrow on the brow?
'Forgive my son'—the comic genius cry'd:
He never grieved a soul; but when he died!"

Mr Stayley was, in his day, quite an original character; whether as actor, teacher of elocution and English, poet or what not, nothing seemed to come amiss to him. He was far from being a genius, but his versatility must have been great; yet although such an one, we should conceive, would be of considerable utility in a theatrical establishment—perhaps from this very reason—he had become, as we have already seen, very unpopular with the Canongate management. This, during the following year, brought about results of great importance in the History of the Edinburgh Stage.

At his benefit, on April 3rd, Mr Stayley played Hamlet; he then "treated the ladies and gentlemen to a dish of Mr Foote's best tea." To which was added a comedy in five acts, altered from *The Mistake* by himself—called *Metaphrastus, or the Wrangling Lovers*—the performance concluding with Ranger's description of a playhouse, or "Bucks have at ye all, adapted to the meridian of Edinburgh!" The announcement of this somewhat liberal entertainment finishes by stating, that "the house will be illuminated with wax. Mr S., whose first arrival in this kingdom was about three months ago, intirely relies on the voluntary pleasure of the public for those honours at his benefit, which want of acquaintance and longer opportunity to endeavour to merit will scarce allow him to expect."

The last performance for the season was on April 21st, when the *Clandestine Marriage* was played for the first time here; the characters by Aickin, Tindal, Didier, Quin, Lancashire, Kennedy, Mrs Bland Hamilton, Miss Westray, Mrs Robson, Mrs Didier, &c.

There does not appear to have been a regular summer season, but on October 11th Mr Stayley got possession of the theatre, and gave a per-

formance of the *Gentle Shepherd*, himself playing Sir W. Worthy, Mrs Hamilton,* Mause, and the rest of the characters "by lads and lasses in the true language, dress, &c., of the time and country, with a prologue shewing the great utility of the stage, and regard to a graceful and proper manner of speaking and reading, written to be spoken by Mr Stayley." This was a success, and was repeated on the 18th.

The winter season—a most momentous one as it proved—opened on or about the 29th of November 1766 with the *Recruiting Officer*. On December 17th, *Oroonoko* was given, with a Mr Younger from Covent Garden in the title rôle—he had been engaged in the double capacity of actor and assistant manager—and our old friend Mrs Ward as Imoinda. On December 20th, the same lady played Lady Capulet to her daughter's Juliet. At the latter performance, some disturbance seems to have taken place through gentlemen having contrived to get behind the scenes, whereat the management published a notice that stringent regulations had been made to prevent the same occurring in the future. Stamper being dead, Edwin, who was in Ireland, had been asked to fill his place, but unfortunately that gentleman had not sufficient money to pay his passage, so Parsons got most of Stamper's parts.

In the beginning of January, Jackson again made his appearance, and, by his own statement, intended to appear in the new character of purchaser of the theatre. Possibly negotiations were entered into between him and the gentlemen proprietors, who were unquestionably sick of their possession, which was destined indeed to become in their hands, in a few weeks' time, a veritable white elephant. Jackson's account,† however, of his connection with the affair reads much more like romance than truth. He says, that an "honourable personage" dissuaded him from completing the purchase, and even caused him to determine to "bid adieu to every connection with the stage for ever." How ill he kept his resolution will soon appear. What the "honourable personage" had snatched from the grip of the gentlemen proprietors, namely, a purchaser for the theatre, was almost immediately thrown in their way by one of the most curious and at the same time eventful incidents we have yet recorded.

Mr Stayley, as already mentioned, contrived to make himself unpopular inside the theatre, the result of which was his non-engagement for this season. But although unpopular inside he was far from being so outside,

* The Edinburgh Mrs Hamilton, undoubtedly.

† History of Scottish Stage, p. 59 and on.

and in fact, according even to Jackson, who appears to have been no friend of his, he had gained for himself with certain people the name of being a great actor.

"Mr Stayley," says Jackson,* "to a tincture of Genius, had acquired a smattering of stage knowledge † which might have rendered him an useful member to a theatre; but a mediocrity in the science (*sic*) did not suit his VAST IDEAS. He had adopted in compliance with the taste of his audience, a pomposity in his pronunciation and an eccentricity of tones, and mode of deportment, which, by a country audience, was pronounced *great acting*."

"I accidentally saw him perform Macbeth at a provincial theatre. In the battle between him and Macduff, after fighting round each front wing, and having been ten times apparently run through the body, and twice down, he got up, and staggering towards the lamps, fell a third time; where upon one knee, or writhing in different postures, he uttered a dying speech of five-and-twenty lines composed by himself, and, at length, expired amidst a thunder of applause; and the bulk of the audience retiring, pronounced him the first actor in the world."

The result of Stayley's not being engaged was a riot in the theatre, of the most violent type. Jackson, who was an eye witness, describes it as follows :—‡

"Some of the most violent of his (Stayley's) partizans assembled in the pit and called for the manager. The sum of their requisition was that Mr Stayley should be engaged. He was in waiting in one of the upper boxes, and was at the desire of the party, with the forced consent of the managers, admitted upon the stage to tell *his own story*. He advanced forward to the audience, in order to deliver, obviously, a prepared speech. 'I am proud,' says he, and sorry thus to appear before this audience; proud for the honour and sorry for the cause —' The partial and prepared few who had espoused the part of the actor, though they had procured him an entrance to the stage, could not command the voice of the house. The friends of the managers and lovers of order stopped the speaker short, by a majority of voices insisting upon the amusements of the evening being continued. Stayley retired disappointed and disconcerted, amidst a confused clamour; and the play and farce went on without further molestation. When the curtain dropped the malcontents remained behind; and though scanty in their numbers, made so violent and successful an effort upon the fears of the managers as to extort from them a promise that Mr Stayley should be engaged."

The management had committed a blunder in not having engaged Stayley at the opening of the season, and had they been wise they would have rectified their omission by yielding with a good grace on this occasion. Had they done so victory had been theirs, for notwithstanding anything Stayley may have been as an actor, they should have humoured their

* History of Scottish Stage, p. 60.

† A remark evidently prompted by jealousy, as Stayley had been a number of years on the stage, longer in fact than Jackson.

‡ History of Scottish Stage, p. 61, &c.

patrons, the public, by giving them what they so plainly demanded. Jackson shrewdly remarks, had he been manager, "as long as they chose to come, the public should have seen him." The fault up to this point was want of tact or discernment on the part of the managers; but their subsequent conduct was foolishness of so gross a nature, as almost to deserve the consequences it drew upon them. The next morning but one * after the riot the following hand-bill appeared :—

"THEATRE.

"EDINBURGH, *January 12, 1767.*

"The managers and performers humbly hope, that, from the dangerous situation both they and the Theatre were in on Saturday night, after the farce was over, from a party who stayed behind the rest of the audience, in behalf of *Mr Stayley*, and, by throwing stones, pieces of sticks, half pence, and lighted candles, COMPELLED a promise of his being engaged, as the ONLY MEANS left to *preserve the theatre from fire and destruction*, they shall stand justified to the public in suspending all entertainments till they can be assured of a proper protection; and also of refusing to admit as one of their community, a man capable of taking such unwarrantable and wicked means to gain his ends.

J. DAWSON.
D. BEATT.

JAMES AICKIN.
JOSEPH YOUNGER.
A. J. DIDIER.
W. SEDGWICK.
WILLIAM ADAMS.
C. SMITH.
CHA. TINDAL.
THOS. LANCASHIRE.
SIMEON QUIN.
THOS. YOUNG."

This defiant resolution was further emphasised by bills posted about the town as follows :—

"THEATRE.
THERE WILL BE
NO PLAY
TILL FURTHER NOTICE."

The "further notice" was given on the 24th, on which evening the house was re-opened. The managers probably thought that the excitement had cooled down; but they were grievously mistaken. The theatre was immediately filled, and symptoms of the coming storm were soon abundantly manifest. Noise was all that was indulged in for a while, then a peremptory demand was made for an apology from the management. This was re-

* The riot was on January 10th.

fused ; so, after the ladies had been allowed to leave the building, the audience proceeded to wreck the house before and behind the scenes. Benches were torn up, candles thrown about, scenes smashed, and everything destroyed that could be ; their ire even extended to the mirror in the green room, which was thrown on the floor and broken. The actors at first, it seems, tried to keep the rioters off the stage, and to this end defended their stronghold with stage weapons ; even the musicians made some sort of stand in their borderland between the pit and stage ; but neither fiddle bows nor mock halberds proved of any avail against real swords and improvised cudgels, the only reverse the attacking party received being when several of them tumbled headlong down a trap which had been cunningly loosened from below. The City Guard turned out, but were also repulsed, and by the time a detachment of soldiers, sent for from the Castle, had made its appearance, the theatre was gutted alike of rioters and fittings.

A most interesting and graphic description of the scene is given by the semi-innocent cause of all the destruction, namely, Mr Stayley. It appears in an exceedingly curious pamphlet published by that gentleman shortly after the riot, and when he had made up his mind to settle in Edinburgh as a master of elocution. It is “entitled, THE THEATRICAL HURRICANE.”

“The proverb says, and proverbs seldom lie,
 We look on troubles past with well pleased eye.
 If vengeful Heav’n,—for causes of its own,
 Be pleas’d to send a furious *tempest* down ;
 With dreadful frowns eclipse the darken’d day,
 Tear forests up, and sweep whole flocks away ;
 How soon the Power,—If supplication bend,
 Can prove, appeas’d, a kind, forgiving friend ;
 Bless, with a peaceful *Calm*, the sunshine air,
 And what He had destroyed—again repair !
 So when *your* late resentment rose so high,
 And fell, like thunder, from the bursting sky ;
 Drove, like a whirlwind, o’er this—mimic world,
 And all to ruin and confusion hurl’d ;
 Not even sparing *Juliet’s* nuptial bed,*
 Where *Beauty* just before repos’d her head ;
 While horrid *cat-calls* terrify the ear,
 And drive our *music* from their *midway* sphere.
 The fiery *Tybalt* shudder’d at the sight !
 And banish’d *Romeo* took a *second* flight !

* The play that night was *Romeo and Juliet*.

The frighted *Fryar* left his cross and ran !
 And dead *Mercutio* rose a *graver* man !
 Sly *Abram* took a peep, and lost his glee ;
 Nor stay'd to ask—' Do you bite your thumb at me ?'
 And where the shame ? When danger was so great,
 The *bravest* gen'als will sometimes retreat.
 No honour, rashly, like a *fool* to die :
 E'en *Hector* chose himself one day to fly ;
 And left his *Trojan* walls alone to stand,
 And bear the fury of *Achilles'* hand ;
 And stand they did, at least, for ten *long year*,*
 But ten *short minutes* did our bus'ness here.
 Our *foils* gave way before *Toledo* steel,
 And *real* rage made mimic anger reel.
 While some staunch *bucks* ; O, fatal dire mishap !
 Were caught themselves in our *theatric trap* ; †
 But, scorning fear, gave one conclusive blow,
 And sunk, like *Banquo's* ghost, to realms below !
 While those above, who saw their tragic end,
 (Extravagance of grief bespeaks a friend)
 In *vengeful sorrow*, rang so loud a knell,
 They crack'd, in *doleful peals*, our fun'ral bell. ‡
 While some *young* hand seiz'd time by the fore-lock
 And broke his *main spring*, when they broke our clock
 A clock ! which went as true as clock could go ;
 But *six* at *night* some thought it struck too slow
 Th' *appointed* hour which bad our *curtain* rise
 To entertain you, with a vast surprise !
 Some *strutting* hero ! and a *ranting* elf—
 Your pardon, Brethren, for I mean *myself*.

But oh ! the direst deed sure ever done ;
 Our *mirror*, Ladies ! bright as any sun !
 Our fine large *glass* ! where many a *King* and *Queen*
 Have view'd their *figures* and *majestic* mien ;
 Where I *myself* have ogled heretofore,
 And seen such *sights* as I shall see no more !
 That very *glass*—*weep*, Ladies, while I speak,
 (But *brittle* things ye know are apt to *break*)
 Was dash'd in shivers on the *green-room* floor,
 And laid *interr'd* beneath an *unhing'd* door.

* Stayley in a note says, " Bad grammar, but *Poetica licentia*."

† The large trap in the middle of the stage gave way with several gentlemen, who, cutting the rope which supported it, went to the bottom.

‡ A large bell which hung behind the scenes.

But now, with joy, we see the *deluge* cease,
And the *white dove* return'd again with *peace* ;
With pleasure view each *crowded, brilliant* row,
Sure sign of *concord*, like the *heavenly bow* ;
And, like that *token* of IMMORTAL grace,
May sacred *beauty* ever gild this place ;
May we no more *provoke the public rage*,
And may the public *guard a grateful stage*."

When the uproar was over, the long arm of the law was reached out to punish those who had been foremost in fomenting it. These were for the most part law students and young lawyers, a section of the community which on one or two subsequent occasions were very forward in making disturbances in the theatre, and were just as sharp as and perhaps a trifle more spirited than their successors of to-day. An action was brought against them by the proprietors of the theatre for the wilful destruction of the property, and as they were destitute of any means of defence, they were compelled to resort to stratagem. After casting about for a while, they hit upon a most excellent device to avoid the consequences of the action should it come to a hearing.

It consisted in bringing a counter action against the proprietors of the theatre,* who were some of the most respectable persons in Edinburgh, as being liable, under the statute of Queen Anne, where owners of unlicensed theatres were classed as "rogues and vagabonds," to be "stripped naked from the middle, and openly whipped until his or her body be blooded, or may be sent to the house of correction, there to be kept at hard labour," &c. ; also under the statute 10th of George II. This was a very serious action. No less than four of the proprietors of the theatre were Judges of the Supreme Court, and might have been tried as rogues and vagabonds ; in fact, so general was the proprietary of the theatre, that it was impossible for their lordships to try the question. The names of the Judges entered as proprietors were Lord Aylemoor, Lord Monboddo, Lord Ankerville, and Mr Baron Stewart (Court of Exchequer). Not only were these four judges proprietors, but several of the Lords of Session had sons in the same predicament. Such could not judge in their sons' cause, so it was found that a quorum of judges to preside and pronounce in the cause could not be obtained. Therefore, most fortunately, both actions were quashed. The one could not go on without the other.

* Report of Trial, 1825, *Siddons v. Ryder*. Lord Alloway's opinions.

And so ended as it were in convulsions the last season of the theatre in Edinburgh without a patent. The riots, however, had done some good, for they made it most plain that such a state of things as an illegal theatre, with the principal dignitaries of the law as proprietors, was an anomaly not to be endured. So several gentlemen, independently of the proprietors, petitioned Parliament for a patent. Then the proprietors, hearing of this, made common cause with them, for they could easily see that were a patent to be obtained which was independent of their theatre they would lose considerably. A bill had been drafted and sent up to London to be brought before the House of Commons; but, better counsels prevailing, a clause was eventually added to the bill then preparing for the extension of the royalty of the city, enabling his majesty to license a theatre in Edinburgh. The gentlemen proprietors stated publicly, at a meeting held in "Hazard's" during the month of January,* that whenever the patent had been secured their only desire would be to cover some losses they had sustained in connection with the old house; after which they were willing to deliver over the whole thing, patent and all, to whomsoever the public approved. How they kept their word we shall see. In the mean time the playhouse was put into a sufficient state of repair, and several members of the late company took advantage of it to have benefit performances. The first, however, who took the opportunity to "turn an honest penny,"† was Mr John Lee, the former proprietor of the building, who had been prevailed upon to make application to the proprietors for the patent. Lee was not well advised in this, for although a public favourite, he could scarcely have forgotten his former disputes with the gentlemen proprietors, not to mention his incarceration in connection with the affair. Perhaps he thought they had forgotten, or else that they only awaited an opportunity of making retribution for the injuries they had formerly done him. But although the proprietors repeated their former declaration that in the disposal of the patent they would be entirely governed by the public voice, it seems very clear, that while giving these assurances they were all the time secretly arranging to dispose of the patent (when it was got) to another gentleman, who was not even known as yet to the Edinburgh public. Lee, although an older, does not seem to have become a much wiser man, than when he ran his head into the lawyers' clutches ten years before, or he would have perceived that even if his application

* See Pamphlet entitled "Nil Mortalibus Arduum," 1767.

† March 2nd, *Suspicious Husband*.

was not distasteful in itself, it was at once rendered so by the backing it received from the Stayley party, who strongly supported him. In the mean time, Mrs Baker had her night on March 5th, followed by Miss Ward and Mr Younger. Mr Aickin, it may be mentioned, had departed ere this for London, where he was engaged at Drury Lane Theatre.

Beat, as will be seen by the following extract from a letter of Mrs Baker's to Tate Wilkinson, * had also left :—

“Beat has taken himself to his brother's in Fifeshire, and lives secured from duns, upon the fat of a lean land. The magnanimous Stayley was left behind in Edinburgh, where he is employed in writing madrigals to his own praise ; *sad* ones they are indeed ; and Lancashire draws beer opposite St Mary's Wynd.”

Mrs Ward risked a benefit on the 30th, but, alas ! her popularity was evidently gone, for we read in the *Courant* of the following Wednesday as follows :—

“Mrs Ward thinks it her duty to return her most grateful thanks to the few friends who did her the favour of appearing at her benefit on Monday last, and also thinks it necessary to inform the public that, as a recompense for her quitting London for Edinburgh, she has received about forty pounds for her performance here, instead of two hundred and twenty had she continued in England for the same space of time.”

A few days after this a company of equilibrists moved up from Bruce's Close into the theatre, and during the race week a Mr Fisher's Company, from the west country, gave a few performances.

And so things went on quietly enough till the middle of November, about which time a rumour spread that the newly acquired patent had been *made over* by the gentlemen proprietors to a Mr David Ross, late of Covent Garden, but hitherto unknown to fame in Edinburgh. This caused much speculation, and when the news developed from rumour to certainty, the excitement of the playgoing public seems to have known no bounds. Two parties were formed ; one supporting the proprietors, and the other, self-styled the “public party,” with Lee and Stayley in command. The latter party was mad with rage now that it found itself outwitted, while Ross's supporters exulted that the tables were turned upon the instigators of the Stayley riot. It was urged on the one hand that the proprietors had no right to dispose of the patent save with the consent and approval of the public—especially in the face of their expressed

* Memoirs, vol. iv. p. 26.

sentiments on the matter. On the other hand, the proprietors, now that they had actually obtained the patent, chose to ignore the pretensions of the public party, and denied all obligations. And there can be little doubt that these gentlemen, although exalted in rank and as might be supposed removed from such feelings, felt a considerable amount of grim satisfaction in thwarting the wishes of the people who had given them so much trouble and annoyance. The first decided action on the part of the opposition, as the popular party may be termed, was taken on November 27th, when a handbill was circulated stating, "As it is now certain that the gentlemen" (*i.e.*, the proprietors), "who took upon them this day se'nnight to form a resolution with regard to the disposal of the patent for a theatre in this place were no more than *trustees for the public*, after their debts were paid or security granted therefor, it is hoped that all gentlemen who disapprove of their extraordinary resolution will meet at Fortune's to-morrow at 11 o'clock, to consider what steps are proper to be taken to prevent its being carried into execution."

The meeting was accordingly held, and Alexander Lockhart of Craighouse, Esq., Dean of the Faculty of Advocates, was elected preses, when it was agreed that Mr Ross was an "IMPROPER PERSON" to be entrusted with the management of the theatre; and a committee was formed consisting of the Chairman, the Earl of Kelly, Lord Gardenstoun, Hon. Mr Baron Grant, the Solicitor General, Sir Adam Ferguson, Bart., Archibald Cockburn, Sheriff-Deputy of Edinburgh County, Patrick Millar, Bailie of Edinburgh, &c., who were to take the necessary steps to prevent Mr Ross getting the patent.

The only result was a fierce paper warfare, which was taken up on both sides with right good will, every sort of sarcasm, abuse, and threat being enlisted in the cause. Ross knowing very well that he was in undoubted possession and could snap his fingers at his opposers, issued an address setting forth his claims to the patent, while Lee followed suit by publishing an account of his previous grievances with the late proprietors—a silly thing when he wanted a favour from the very same men. It is unnecessary, and would prove but uninteresting, to go in detail through all the handbills, pamphlets, &c., that appeared. One or two, however, are selected as specimens of the shorter (and perhaps more pithy) productions. The first is a mock playbill, hitting off the characteristics of the new company :—

“At the THEATRE ROYAL in GRAY’S CLOSE,
on Saturday, Dec. 12th,
will be presented a COMEDY (altered from Congreve in 4 Acts),
called the

DOUBLE DEALERS,

Maskwell by Mr Hogshead.

The other characters by Messrs Solon, Veerabout, Perpendicular, Opium, Miss Perpendicular, the celebrated Miss Fanny,* and others.

Before the play, gratis, contrary to the custom of the playbills formerly, will be performed a CONCERT of Vocal and Instrumental Music. The Orchestra to be conducted by the Hon. Mr Aron Rant, who has himself made all the fiddles and bows for the occasion. . . .

N.B.—Mr Opium will provide night caps, gratis, for those that are inclined to be sleepy.”

Mr Ross, who acted in a heavy manner, is clearly indicated by “Mr Opium.” The following is a handbill of the time :—

“We have been always aware not only of the
WHO but the WHAT
The public is a Beast
In America a LYON
In Scotland an A——
Let it bray.”

This effusion drew forth the following reply :—

“In mentioning the *who* and *what*,
The *what* explained we see,
To name the *who* might prove as pat,
For what’s the *who* but LEE?”

The more serious business of the autumn consisted, in the first place, of getting the theatre sufficiently repaired to be able to continue the performances until better accommodation could be provided for the Drama. This Ross fully intended to do as soon as possible, and he showed in the working out of his schemes, and the accomplishment of his design, none of the laziness he was notorious for. In the mean time, however, the old playhouse being patched up a little, was opened on December 9th, 1767, the play being *The Earl of Essex*, which thus had the distinction of being the first legally performed play in Scotland. Mr Ross himself appeared in the title rôle, and previous to the play spoke a prologue from

* This referred to Mrs Ross, who had been the “famous” Fanny Murray.

the pen of James Boswell, Esq.* According to Jackson, the season that followed was a prosperous one. The novelty of performing plays by royal permission probably was sufficient attraction for a few months ; for on the principle that the king can do no wrong, many people who previously had absented themselves may have been induced to witness an entertainment to which the royal sanction had been given. Whatever made the play-house suddenly popular, it was neither splendid acting nor the production of novelties, notwithstanding that Mrs Baker was the leading actress, and Mr Ross himself took the principal male characters. The season lasted till the middle of May. Jackson, in his History, states that during this season he again appeared in Edinburgh, in the part of Romeo to Miss Brown's Juliet. In this statement, Jackson displays a very fair specimen of the carelessness with which he wrote, for it was not till the succeeding season that either he or Miss Brown so appeared.

The first notice we have of the season (1768-9) is on the 30th of January 1769, when a performance was given of the "serious" opera of the *Royal Shepherd*, with scenes (by Mr Moore) and dresses "entirely new." In this Miss Brown—who was a daughter of Sowdon—appeared as Thamyras. During the season, Jackson acted Hamlet to Miss Brown's Ophelia, the Guardian to the same lady's Harriet, and, as already said, Romeo to her Juliet. What more fitting than that during the summer recess they should take a benefit for themselves and enact the good old fashioned domestic drama (tragedy sometimes!) of Marriage? And on the opening of the theatre next season, November 18th, we find in the playbills Mrs Jackson, instead of Miss Brown. A few days previous to this, the following notice had appeared in the public press :—

"The unhappy accident of the bridge, deprives the town of a convenient road to the new theatre, and therefore Mr Ross cannot open it this season. The old theatre has been surveyed by the Dean of Guild Court, and is quite sufficient. Mr Ross hopes the friends and patrons of the Drama, will not add to his losses and disappointments by keeping from the old theatre, as they may rest assured if it was not perfectly safe he would not suffer it to be opened."

* See Appendix.

FOURTH PERIOD,

1769 to 1809.



Theatre Royal 1830 to 1859



The Old Theatre Royal, Princes St, Edinburgh.

Prior to 1830

CHAPTER XI.

THE THEATRE ROYAL IN SHAKSPERE SQUARE.



It is now necessary to review the steps Ross had been taking during his two years of proprietorship to secure a proper theatrical building. Casting his eyes about him, he could not fail to see that fashion was steadily setting in in favour of migration to the fields beyond the "Nor' Loch." Although but a few houses had showed themselves in that neighbourhood so early as 1767, it was evident that ere long it would become the home of all the first people in Edinburgh. Hence the "new" town, as laid down in Craig's plan, was the spot to be pitched upon for a new theatre. That settled, Ross' next care was to raise a sufficient capital to commence building, and in this he showed himself an adept. According to Jackson, whose account * of the transaction is the only available authority, Ross proceeded somewhat on the lines adopted in connection with patent houses in England, and issued shares at £100 each, which entitled the holders to free admission and three per cent. ; the security being a mortgage over the property. Twenty-five † of these were taken up. The building, however, cost about £5,000, in addition to which the late proprietors were to receive £1,100 for their old tumble-down building in the Canongate ; the expense of the patent, which Ross had to defray, came to £300 ; while £500 had to be invested in two annuities of £50 each for two old ladies, Mrs Hamilton and Mrs Thomson, who were among the *original* proprietors. In all,

* History of Scottish Stage, p. 73.

† Jackson's statement is confirmed by the evidence produced in arbitration when the building was acquired by the Government in 1859. From it we learn that twenty-two gentlemen each took one £100 share, and one gentleman £300 worth of stock. They were to get free access, and three per cent., except one or two, who got five per cent. and no admission.

close upon £7,000 * was required before completing the new theatre. The site which had been selected, as is well known, was where our General Post Office now stands. When taken by Ross, it was part of a field belonging to the Orphan Hospital, now removed ; curiously also it was the very spot that had been used for about twenty years as a preaching ground by the famous Whitfield.† It is said that this eminent divine, on coming to Edinburgh in 1768, and finding a “devil’s” house in process of construction upon the spot where he used to denounce all such abominations, was fired with righteous zeal to such an extent that with difficulty he was restrained from there and then carrying a lighted brand to consume it ! He however confined himself to maledictions, which no doubt he did not spare. Despite this, and notwithstanding the various and trying difficulties Ross had to contend with—chief among which was the falling of part of the North Bridge in November 1769 ‡—the new Theatre Royal—destined as it was to have a remarkable, in fact, unique career—was opened on December 9th, 1769, just two years to a day from the first legal performance of a play in Scotland. The piece played on this occasion was the *Conscious Lovers*. On the Monday following, December 11th, the *Beaux Stratagem* was given, by desire of the Grand Master and the fraternity of Freemasons, Mr Ross playing Archer, and Mrs Baker, Mrs Sullen. But although there were several “bespoke” nights, and notwithstanding the prices were raised, § the season proved a conspicuous failure. Want of capital to engage novelties was no doubt chiefly at the bottom of this. Jackson sensibly remarks,—“Depending too much upon the novelty of new walls, new scenery, and new decorations, he had neglected providing a company of performers that ought to have kept pace with the splendour of the house.” || A publication called the *New Rosciad*, appeared during January 1770, containing rhyming criticisms on the members of Ross’s company. In this, Mrs Baker was very highly spoken of, while Mrs Jackson was somewhat severely handled. This called

* Lee Lewis says that Bland was then in Edinburgh, and lent Ross £1600. This sum Ross bought off by granting an annuity of £100 a year to Bland, and giving him a benefit every year during the month of February for £25 charge. This account is most likely correct. The annuity at all events comes to the front again in 1777.

† At one time Whitfield had a large tent erected on the spot, and charged for admission.

‡ See *ante*, p. 148.

§ They were now, pit and boxes, 3s. ; gallery, 2s. ; upper gallery, 1s. ; at which rates it held about £140.

|| Lee Lewis says, “Ross made no great stir to engage performers, but his perpetually drunken prompter, Heartley, kept on writing letters of proposed engagements to people who regarded his letters, as they deserved, with contempt.”

forth a reply, chiefly devoted to extolling Mrs Jackson, and running down Mrs Baker. It is very likely, from the style of the writing, that the reply came from Mr Jackson's pen. In the first publication the talents of the majority of the company are discounted in a marked manner, and judging from all appearances, the criticisms, although disparaging, were mainly just. So without funds, and disheartened with his enterprise, Ross made over the theatre on a three years' lease to the famous Samuel Foote, the terms, according to Jackson, being 500 guineas per annum. This led to the accomplishment of a feat which, considering the age in which it was done, with its attendant drawbacks of travelling, &c., was brilliant even for such a mind as Foote's to conceive.

We have already seen that this clever playwright, comedian, and wit, was the first legitimate "star" who ever ventured so far as Edinburgh. In fact "starring," beyond the circuit of Bath and Dublin, was, when Foote started on his first journey to Scotland in 1759, quite an innovation on established customs; but now in 1770 he conceived and executed a scheme of surpassing dimensions. This was no less than the bringing of his Haymarket Company* right down to Edinburgh. The Haymarket was only licensed for plays during the summer months, when Drury Lane and Covent Garden were closed; so Foote embraced this opportunity of employing not only himself, but his company as well, during the winter months, by acting in Edinburgh. Thanks to Jackson, this fact has been long well known to the curious in such matters; but somehow the importance of the undertaking and its proper significance, when taken along with the fact that such an experiment was not again attempted for nearly *ninety years* afterwards, has never been properly emphasised or pointed out. It stands out nevertheless as a monument to the enterprise of the man who conceived and carried it to a successful issue. The season opened about the middle of November,† but ere that a somewhat curious adventure befell Foote during his journey north.‡ A violent snowstorm had come on, which obliged Foote to put up at Moffat for a night, and he lodged at the King's Arms in that town. Next morning he set out, but found himself completely snowbound, and had to retrace his steps to Moffat.

* Lee Lewis says he paid £100 a week to his company while in Edinburgh.

† Genest says November 10th.

‡ It is related by Chambers, who gives the date of this adventure 1774-5 (during which winter Foote was not in Scotland), but from the contents of a letter from Foote to Wilkinson printed further on, it must have happened at this period—that is, if there is any truth in the story at all, and considering the manner in which Chambers picked up his stories it is at least doubtful.

There a certain Mr M'Culloch of Ardwell, a genial Commissioner of Scotch Customs, learning who the unfortunate traveller was, wrote and affixed to Foote's carriage window the following lines :—

“ While Boreas his flaky storm did guide,
 Deep covering every hill o'er Tweed and Clyde,
 The north-wind god spied travellers seeking way ;
 Sternly he cried, ‘ Return your steps, I say ;
 Let not *one foot*, 'tis my behest, profane
 The sacred snows that lie on Erichstane ! ”

Foote reading this relaxed into a smile, and said, “ I should like to know who wrote that ; be he who he may, he is no mean hand at an epigram.” Ardwell acknowledging the soft impeachment, Foote continued, “ My dear sir, no apology is necessary ; I am fine game for every one, and I take any one for game when it suits me.”

During the several days they had to remain until a thaw set in, a close intimacy sprung up between this gentleman and Foote, and afterwards they spent many a jovial evening at Ardwell's house in Springfield, Leith Walk.*

The good folk of Edinburgh were not backward, it would seem, in showing that they appreciated the novelty of seeing a first-class London company brought to their doors. Foote has indeed been popularly accredited with having cleared a thousand pounds during the season ; whether he did so or not it is, of course, impossible now to say, as managers then did not seek to advertise their successes by publishing the amounts of their private incomes. It has to be borne in mind that the theatre only held £140 ; that the nights of acting were sometimes three, sometimes four in a week ; and above all, that Foote had a large and highly paid company in his service ; and lastly, that he himself lived like a prince—when his funds admitted of it. Taking these things into consideration, it is more than probable that the statement which Cooke makes in his life of Foote is true, namely, that although the season paid expenses, Foote was by no means compensated for the trouble and anxiety attending the venture. The following letter is sufficiently interesting to warrant insertion here :—

“ To Tate Wilkinson. Esq.

“ I thank you, my dear Sir, for your congratulations on my arrival in Scotland, where, by the by, I have encountered more perils than in a voyage to the Indies. Not to mention

* The centre one.

mountains, precipices, savage cataracts" (Foote evidently did not appreciate scenery !) "and more savage men, I was locked up for near a week in a village, dirty, dismal, and desolate, by a deluge of snow.

"I think of quitting this town in three weeks, and shall certainly pay my homage to you in your kingdom of York, but not with the least design of becoming your subject. All my campaigns shall end with this place, and my future operations be confined to my own principality. I am glad to find that your theatre stands its ground, though you are so unfortunate as to hobble a little. I shall let you know, by a line, on what day I shall be likely to see you. I beg my compliments to your amiable queen, and the whole royal brood.

Believe me, sincerely yours,

"Edinburgh, February 16th."

SAM FOOTE.

A great deal of the success of this season was unquestionably due to the excellent acting of Mr Woodward, who as a comedian stands out with a reputation that has had few duplicates. Charles Mathews perhaps alone among recent comedians was in many respects what Woodward is said to have been. The latter actor, however, added to his comedy acting a wonderful ability as harlequin. The pupil of the first and best of all harlequins, Rich, he is said to have been second only to his master. The part of harlequin in those days, be it remembered, was no mean one in which to excel ; and to illustrate how completely unlike the modern gentleman in spangles is to his predecessor, it is worth noting that Woodward always had a double for jumping through walls and windows and such matters of routine, the acting portion of the part being all that he would trouble himself with. His first appearance here was on November 19th, in the part of Marplot, in the *Busybody*. So excellent was Woodward in this rôle, that even Garrick had given up acting it for fear of invidious comparisons being made between them. The remaining parts were cast as follows :—Sir George Airy = Robson ; Charles = Dancer ; Sir Jealous Traffick = Collins ; Whisper = Lancashire ; Sir Francis Gripe = Weston ; Patch = Mrs Didier ; Miranda = Mrs Baker. With the *Intriguing Chambermaid*—Drunken Colonel = Woodward ; Goodall = Farrell ; Trusty = Knowles ; Lettice = Mrs Baker. On Saturday, November 24th, Foote produced his own play of the *Minor*, which, as was to be expected of a play that held up hypocrisy to ridicule, immediately brought the thunders of the clergy down about his ears. On the Sunday but one following, the Rev. James Bain preached on the "Theatre licentious and perverted," the whole discourse being an illiberal and narrow-minded attack upon the *Minor*. The sermon was immediately after printed, and with a somewhat curious sense of humour was dedicated by the author

to "Samuel Foote, Esq." No doubt that gentleman appreciated the compliment, and laughed well in his sleeve at the fine advertisement he was getting without payment through Mr Bain's pious exertions.*

December 3rd, *Merchant of Venice*.—Shylock = Foote ; Antonio = Sowdon ; Gratiano = Jackson ; Launcelot = Weston ; Gobbo = Lancashire ; Portia = Mrs Baker.

January 3rd 1771, *Old Batchelor*.—Fondlewife = Foote ; Bellmour = Fearon ; Vainlove = Robson ; Sharper = Didier ; Sir Joseph Wittol = Woodward ; Captain Bluff = Gentleman ; Setter = Vandermere ; Belinda = Mrs Jackson ; Araminta = Mrs Collins ; Silvia = Mrs Didier ; Lucy = Mrs Fearon ; Lætitia = Mrs Baker.

On February 14th, Mrs Jewell made her first appearance here as Polly in the *Beggars' Opera*, and, if a highly eulogistic notice which appeared soon after in the *Courant* may be trusted, made a great impression by her fine vocalisation. Robson was the Macheath, and Mrs Didier played Lucy. Woodward took his benefit on March 2nd, *Every Man in His Humour* being the play, in which he sustained the part of Bobadil. This was generally allowed to be his best impersonation. He first played it in 1751,† when Garrick revived the play with much splendour at Drury Lane. During the greater part of the rehearsals at that time the comedian seemed very attentive to Garrick's ideas as to how Bobadil should be played. But in the absence one morning of the great man, Woodward indulged himself in the exhibition of his own intended manner of representation. While the actors were laughing and applauding, Garrick entered the theatre, and attended unperceived to what was going on. At length he stepped forward, and cried, "Bravo, Harry, bravo! upon my soul, bravo! Why, now this is—no, no, I can't say this is quite my idea of the thing. Yours is, after all—to be sure, rather—ha—" Woodward perceiving the manager a little embarrassed, with well affected modesty said, "Sir, I will act the part, if you desire it, exactly according to your notion of it." "No, no! by no means, Harry. D—n it, you have actually clinched the matter. But why, my dear Harry, would not you communicate before?"‡

On his benefit here, the attendance of ladies and gentlemen was so great that not only the pit but a great part of the first gallery was par-

* The sermon was published at 4d., and went through two editions before the year was out.

† 29th November.

‡ Davies' Miscellanies, vol. ii. 68-9.

tioned off as boxes. On the Monday following (March 4th), Woodward published in the newspapers his "most sincere and grateful acknowledgments to the nobility and gentry for their splendid and numerous appearance," and begged leave to say, "he is more sensible of their favours, as they were conferred without the least application." If true—and there is no reason to doubt it—Woodward's was perhaps the first benefit in Edinburgh that had been voluntarily supported. The custom was for actors to wait upon their patrons and attempt to sell tickets, but more often to submit to the most humiliating and insulting usage and language. An epilogue was specially written for Mrs Jewell to speak on her benefit (March 19th), but there being not sufficient time to procure the Lord Chamberlain's permission for this, it had to be left out! The play was *Macbeth* (also played on Mrs Jackson's benefit, March 13th), with Jackson as Macbeth; Macduff = Fearon; and Hecate = Mrs Jackson. The last night of the season was on April 10th, and seems to have been a second benefit for Woodward.

As already indicated, Foote was not greatly charmed with the result of his experiment in Edinburgh, and disposed of his lease to our old friend Digges, who opened the following season with *Macbeth* on November 23rd, 1771, "to a crowded and polite audience." "On Mr Digges' appearance," says the *Courant*, "the applause was the most universal that ever was heard; it was several minutes before he was permitted to speak, and the audience welcomed him not only with thundering claps but with loud and repeated huzzas."* So far so good, and it must have given him satisfaction to see that others besides his creditors remembered him and took an interest in his doings. The company got together was a very good one, and among the members who made their first appearance here may be mentioned Mrs Hartley and Mr Wood.

Mrs Hartley was a woman of extraordinary beauty, which, according to all accounts, had more to do with her success on the stage than any histrionic ability she possessed. Garrick said of her that he never saw a "finer creature," and that her "make was perfect." Her lovely face, and lithe, tall, delicate figure had rapidly won for her the leading place at Covent Garden, in such parts of tender tragedy as *Jane Shore*, and the pining heroines of Murphy's *Alzuma* and Mason's *Elfrida*. When sitting

* Lee Lewis says there was £120 in the house, which although full had almost no ladies among the audience, the time of year being too soon for their public appearance!

for her portrait to Sir Joshua Reynolds,* she gave him the following answer to a compliment he bestowed on her, "Nay, my face may be well enough for shape, but sure 'tis as freckled as a toad's belly." Her first appearance here was as Monimia in the *Orphan*, on December 4th, 1771.

Woods had been delayed in coming north, but where he came from it is by no means clear. One account,† the only one in fact the present writer has been able to discover, says he was at the Haymarket in 1771. This may have been the case, but Genest does not mention his name.

On the second last day of the year *The Jubilee* was "performed for the first time and gave the most general satisfaction to a numerous and polite audience."‡ On this occasion Digges' old characteristic of puffing was splendidly shown in the following paragraph, which went the round of the newspapers.—"We hear the cup made use of in the *Jubilee* was actually cut and made by Shakspeare from a mulberry tree planted by him, that it remained many years in the family, and was very lately presented to Mr Digges by Mr John Shakspeare of Dudley, in Warwickshire (*sic*)—a distant relative of the celebrated poet." (!)

This performance was received with great approbation, and he came in fact a stock piece for several years. One critic upon its first appearance says, "he never remembers to have seen so much regularity of action in a performance where bustle forms a principal ingredient," and another particularly commends the plan of having the members of the procession (of Shakspeare characters) "figuring out by action some principal event in each play."

Two other pieces seem to have been very popular this season, namely, the *West Indian* and *Thomas and Sally*. *Douglas* was performed on January 27th, with the following cast:—Old Norval = Digges; Glenalvon = Woods; Lord Randolph = Adcock; Douglas = Fleetwood; Anna = Mrs Granger; Lady Randolph = Mrs Baker. March 18th was Digges's night, when *King Lear* was played. The whole house was illuminated with wax. The boxes, pit, and first gallery were all at one price, and were all to be "carpeted and cleaned, and great care taken to fix the bottoms of the sconces, so that no damage can be done to the ladies cloaths." This indicates at least one drawback in attending the theatre in those days, namely, the chance of candle drippings falling on the spectator. On April 6th, Bland played Othello for his own benefit, Woods taking the part of Iago, being

* See Life of Reynolds, by Leslie.

† Letters of Candidus, 1802.

‡ *Courant*, January 1st, 1772.

his first appearance in that character, Desdemona = Mrs Hartley. On April 8th, *The Merchant of Venice*. Shylock by Digges, being his first appearance in the part. The season closed April 22nd. A "race week" season followed on July 18th and closed July 31st 1772,* during which brief period no fewer than five of Shakespere's plays were produced! and yet it is said that Shakspere is only now beginning to be appreciated, when on an average we scarcely have an opportunity of seeing as many of the great bard's plays in the same number of years.

Soon after this Digges took unto himself a partner, in the person of John Bland. This individual had passed through quite a romantic career; beginning with a university education, he had set off soldiering during his early years, had served at the battle of Dettingen, and had been made a prisoner of war at Fontenoy. Not content with that, he served under General Honeywood in quelling the Rebellion of 1745, and then transferred his activity to the stage, which he continued to adorn for a very long term of years.†

Digges having secured a partner, set out for London to look after getting recruits and novelties for the coming season. Arrived in the metropolis, he very speedily fell a prey to the rapacity of his creditors, notwithstanding his having taken the precaution to live within the precincts of the court. The way this fell out was as follows:—a certain Dr Baillie had lent sums of money to Mrs Bellamy, so far back as 1761 or 1762, and in 1763 Digges had become security for the amount. This bill became prescribed in seven years; nevertheless the Doctor (who lived in Edinburgh) sued Digges for the money, when that gentleman took the Theatre Royal in 1771, but lost his case for the reason stated. By some legal quirk, however, he obtained a warrant to arrest Digges in London. The method employed to fetch him out of the magic circle of the sanctuary, was to write to him in the name of some actress anxious for an engagement in the north, and who wished to see him; being confined to her rooms, etc. The bait took, and Digges instead of finding an actress met two bailiffs, who speedily gave him the mysterious tap on the shoulder and pronounced the significant words, "In the king's name." The arrestment was illegal, but to obtain redress by fair means would cause a delay of weeks, perhaps months; and in the mean time what could Bland,

**Moss* first appeared here during this season. He was a pupil of Macklin's, and was said to be second only to Kean as Shylock. He filtered down through the profession till he got so low as barns, and died in poverty.

† The famous Mrs Jordan was Bland's niece, and Wm. Glover of Glasgow was a descendant of his.

without a company, do with the Theatre Royal? Baillie solved the difficulty by proposing that Bland and Digges should conjointly surrender all their ready cash, accept two bills for £100 each, and bind themselves to pay £100 yearly until the whole amount of the original debt (£500) should be paid off! There being no hope of immediate redress, they complied. When Digges returned to Scotland, however, he lost no time filing a memorial in the Court of Session to be released from the obligation of the bond, alleging it had been obtained by intimidation, as well as in direct contempt of the previous decision of the Court of Session on the matter.

Notwithstanding this awkward business, the theatre was opened in good time, namely, on November 21st, 1772, when, it was advertised, "care will be taken to have the house properly aired!" The *West Indian* was the opening play, which, according to the *Courant*, was played to a "very polite and numerous audience, and the actress who made her first appearance as Lady Rusport (Mrs Day) received the loudest and most genuine marks of public favour." On December 3rd, the *Beggars' Opera*, Lucy = Mrs Weston (late Miss Adcock); Polly = Miss Withington. December 10th, *Henry VIII.*, Cardinal = Digges; King Henry = Fleetwood; Queen Catherine = Mrs Day; Anna = Mrs Inchbald. During December Digges entered into negotiations to bring down the celebrated Mrs Yates from London.* This was a step highly appreciated by at least one section of the audience, for a number of the Faculty of Advocates subscribed the sum of £150, with which to augment Digges's original offer to £400. Even this sum, however, proved an insufficient bait for the great lady, and it was not till £700 had been offered for herself and husband for the remainder of the season that she consented to come.

The announcement of the completion of the terms of agreement proved very satisfactory to the public, and the excitement it caused was great. The exact date Mr and Mrs Yates were to arrive was unknown, but nevertheless all the places in the theatre were taken up in advance for their first nights, and the manager advertised in the most precise terms that no solicitations on the part of gentlemen to come behind the scenes would be listened to. Mr Yates was the first to make his appearance, on January 11th, when he played Shylock. On the next night but one he appeared in the very different character of Touchstone, and on the following evening as Captain Brazen, in the *Recruiting Officer*.

* Lee Lewis (Memoirs, vol. iii. p. 74) gives a very incorrect account of this engagement.

Still no Mrs Yates, and the suspense on the part of the public was only allayed when Digges announced that through some mistake her stage dresses had not yet arrived, and so she was unable to appear. On January 19th, however, the missing trunks having been recovered, she appeared as Mandane in the play of *Cyrus*, which had never been played here before. She also played on subsequent dates the parts of Belvidera, Lady Townly, Jane Shore, Mrs Oakly, &c. The press spoke in the highest terms of her excellencies, and, indeed, praised the company all round. Perhaps they were right in doing so, although the following very curious contemporary criticism is likely to be trustworthy. It is contained in a letter from Dr Carlyle of Inveresk to a lady friend, and discloses a rather peculiar state of things at the time :—

“ The playhouse has been much frequented since Mrs Yates arrived, who receives infinite applause. For though she often appears on the stage more than half seas over, she’s not the less agreeable to all the male part of her audience, who come there a little disguised themselves ; and in this land of obsequious wives, you know, there is no disputing the taste of the men.” The regular performances at the Theatre were diversified by the appearance of Mr Nicholson Stewart, a local amateur of undoubted abilities, as Richard III. This performance was given for the purpose of helping to build a bridge over the river Carron, the prices asked, and obtained, being 5s. all over the house, by *ticket only*.

Considerable stir was caused by the announcement that a new play entitled *The Prince of Tunis*, by a local author, was to be produced, with Mrs Yates in a principal part. The author of this piece was Henry Mackenzie—the “ Man of Feeling.” It was not long before the interesting fact of the identity of the author became known, and naturally great expectations were indulged in ; many conjectures being made as to the probable success of this, the author’s first dramatic venture, as compared with that of Home’s memorable *Douglas*. Fortune, however, always fickle, denied the same favour she had bestowed on the production of Home’s tragedy, and Mackenzie’s work, although momentarily successful, never obtained a hold on the public.

It was first produced on March 8th, on which occasion Mrs Yates, attired as the “ Genius of Scotland,” spoke a silly prologue. The *Courant* says,—

“ The play was received with very great applause. It is many years since a new play has been ushered into the world at our Theatre. It has been generally allowed that dramatic

genius has been on the decline for several years in Great Britain, and we must give our assent to this opinion. We may affirm that if the testimony of a genteel and crowded audience may be credited, the *Prince of Tunis* will hold a distinguished rank among modern Tragedies. The fable is interesting, the language poetical, the sentiment just, and the catastrophe affecting. The play upon the whole was extremely well acted. Mrs Yates' powers were called forth and shone conspicuously in the unfortunate Zorlima, and the unhappy fate of the virtuous Heli was fairly represented by Mr Digges. When the curtain draws up the audience are surprised with a most picturesque scene, when Mrs Yates appears as the Genius of Scotland, and speaks an excellent prologue."

Despite such a flattering notice, *The Prince of Tunis* was acted but five times during the season.* The names of the other performers in the piece were, Messrs Fleetwood, Inchbald, Woods, and Webb, Miss Glassington and Mrs Weston. Mrs Yates' last night was April 3rd, and the closing performance of the season was on April 23rd, after which the company went to Glasgow.

On July 17th they returned and opened for the race week. London performers being mostly free at this season of the year, it was not wonderful that they, one by one, should follow Foote's good example, and seek both change and profit in a journey to the "Land o' Cakes." On this occasion the folk of Auld Reekie were treated to the performances of the greatest low comedian of his day, namely, Ned Shuter. By some writers he is put down as having been vulgar, and prone to pander to the gallery. Certainly it seems that it was only necessary for him to appear on the stage to put that celestial region in convulsions; but according to many of the best judges, the humour of his performances was of a quality unsurpassed. Charles Dibdin, in his "History of the Stage," describes him as a "theatrical wonder." "Neither on the French nor on the English stage," he says, "do we find any one to whom we can compare him." Shuter had one failing, namely, an overweening love of company, which led him into great social excesses, and eventually, through the agency of the bottle, finished his career prematurely. He died three years after the present date, in his 48th year. During this short summer season was produced, on July 19th, for the first time in Scotland, Goldsmith's then new comedy of *She Stoops to Conquer* or, as it was originally called, *The Mistakes of a Night*, in which Shuter played his original part of Hardcastle. It had been originally produced in London the preceding spring, with great success. Dr Johnson, writing of it before its first production, said,—

* The "Debating Society," at a meeting on March 19th, decided that the *Prince of Tunis* was equal to most of the modern tragedies lately performed or printed in Britain.

“Dr Goldsmith has a new comedy in rehearsal at Covent Garden, to which the manager predicts ill success. I hope he will be mistaken. I think it deserves a very kind reception.”

On November 13th, the Theatre having been “new decorated and painted in the most elegant manner,” was opened for the season. It is worthy of note that only a few days before this * Dr Johnson had returned to Edinburgh from his memorable tour in the Hebrides. It would be interesting to find that he had visited our theatre during his sojourn in Auld Reekie.† He may even have been present at a representation of his friend Goldsmith’s comedy on November 17th, but unfortunately, if he went, Boswell’s prophetic instinct as to what would interest posterity was for once at fault.

On November 29th, *Venice Preserved*.—Pierre = Digges ; Jaffier = Inchbald ; Renault = Woods ; Elliot = Moss ; Belvidera = Mrs Inchbald. On December 1st, *King Lear*.—Lear = Digges ; Bastard = Woods ; Kent = Webb ; Albany = Inchbald ; Cordelia = Mrs Inchbald. December 9th, *Hamlet*.—Hamlet = Digges ; King = Webb ; Ghost = Inchbald ; Polonius = Wilson ; Laertes = Woods ; Osric = Death ; Ophelia = Mrs Weston. January 10th, *Merchant of Venice*.—Launcelot = Moss ; Gobbo = Charteris ; Portia = Mrs Webb.

Mrs Baker does not seem to have appeared at all this season ; her business of teaching English probably took up all her time.

Foote appeared again in Edinburgh on February 11th, the play being *The Bankrupt*, written by himself, and played then for the first time here. According to a contemporary journal, called *The Weekly Magazine*, he received £250 for acting seven nights. On the following 4th of March, Foote appeared for the last time in Scotland.

A tragedy, called *Eldred*, by no other than Jackson the actor, was brought out February 19th, with a small share of success ;‡ the author, his wife, and a Mr Robinson from Dublin, all taking part in the production. The season closed on April 9th with a benefit to Jackson, the play being *The Merry Wives of Windsor*. Sir John Falstaff = Jackson ; Ann Page = Mrs Jones.

During the following season, 1774-5, the opening date of which is uncertain, almost nothing falls to be recorded, excepting the appearance of Mr Dutton on January 14th, and subsequent evenings, in such parts

* November 9th.

† He left on the 22nd.

‡ It was played three nights

as Scrub, Tony, Mungo (*Padlock*), &c. Mr Astley,* with a company of rope dancers and tumblers, drew crowds during the month of January.

During this winter there resided in Edinburgh a gentleman of the name of John Topham, a Londoner, who during his sojourn in the north wrote a number of letters to friends in London, regarding what went on in Edinburgh.† Among other things, he speaks of the Theatre as follows :—

“To R. D., Esq.

“Edinburgh, January 2nd, 1775.

“Sir,

This metropolis is said to be very gay ; if I may judge from the little specimen I have already had of it, reports say nothing but the truth. The concerts have received the assistance of a new singer from London, the assemblies are opened for the reception of those who choose to dance, and the theatrical heroes have already opened their campaign. As yet, I believe, they have had but few spectators, as the genteel people here fix one day for beginning to partake of these amusements, and are so very polite that they never go before that day on any account. In compliance with your desire, I take this leisure of acquainting you with the present state of the theatre, and the performances there.

“The present theatre is situated at the end of the new bridge in the new town, and on the outside is a plain structure, like most others of the same nature. It was built by the subscription of a certain number of gentlemen, who let it originally to a manager for £400 a year. Mr Ross was the first person who took it, and his name was inserted in the patent, which made him manager as long as he chose. A few years ago, plays were not in that repute at Edinburgh they are now. The ministers, jealous for the good of their flock, preached against them, and the poor players were entirely routed. They have now, however, once more taken the field, and the clergy leave them to their ungodliness. During these contests, Mr Ross found that the benefits of the theatre did not answer to the expenses of it, and retreated in good time. Our modern Aristophanes, who imagined he had wit enough to laugh the Scotch out of their money, took it of Mr Ross at the same price that was originally paid for it. He brought on all his own comedies successively, but as most of the humour was local and particular, few people here understood it. . . . Mr Foote attempted to introduce the *Minor* upon the stage. Ministers who had long lain dormant now rose up in arms ; the character of Mrs Cole gave them offence. They imagined themselves pointed out, but were so kind as to throw the injury upon religion. . . . The Scotch clergy, not contented with damning the play itself, very piously pronounced all those damned who went to see it. . . .

“When one recollects the former profession of Mr Digges, the politeness of his manners, and his other accomplishments, one is sorry that his necessities should ever have driven him

* He had performed during the autumn in Edinburgh, at the Comely Gardens, a sort of Vauxhall then very popular, situated at Comely Green. He regularly toured the country year after year with his entire company, after the close of the London season.

† Letters from Edinburgh, written in the years 1774 and 1775, containing some Observations on the Diversions, Customs, Manners, and Laws of the Scotch Nation, during a Six months' Residence in Edinburgh. By John Topham. London : Printed for J. Dodsley in Pall Mall, MDCCLXXVI.

on the stage ; but when one is witness to the attention he pays to his business, to his extreme excellence as an actor, and to the pleasure which he gives his audience at such moments, every man is selfish enough to be happy that those necessities made him a player.

“As to himself, he derives all those brilliant qualifications from nature which form a great actor. He has a handsome and expressive countenance, a penetrating eye, and a good voice. Some people will tell you that there is a severity in his look, ill suited to comic parts ; but those who have seen him in the part of Macheath, must discover that he can dress it in smiles when he pleases. His person is rather above the middle size, well formed, and, as far as his time of life will allow of, capable of assuming any appearance. If he has any fault, generally considered, it is that of not walking the stage so properly as might be expected. He throws too much of that carelessness and indifference into his manner, which in some characters approaches to the vulgar, and can never be adapted to tragedy in any.

“The theatre is of an oblong form, and designed after the manner of the foreign ones. I do not know its exact dimensions, but at 3s. (pit and boxes) it is capable of containing about £130. The pit seems considered here as the *parterre* in the French theatre, into which the gentlemen go who are not sufficiently dressed for the boxes. The ornaments are few, and in an unaffected plain style. It is lighted with wax, and the scenery is well painted.”

In another letter Topham says :

“Digges having had no opportunity of forming his style on the London models, has evolved a style of his own. He is now at the head of a company who seem intended as foils to himself, and though they change every year, I am informed they never change for the better. The smallness of the salaries accounts for this. There is only one or two whose pay exceeds a guinea a week, nor can the receipts of the house afford more, while the rent is so high. Mr Digges is therefore constrained to do that from necessity which, I am told, Mr Garrick does from choice.

“Mr Digges acts each night of performing, four times a week.

“His best parts are—Captain Macheath ; Sir John Restless in *All in the Wrong* ; Sir John Brute,* *The Provoked Wife* ; the Guardian, farce of the *Guardian* ; Pierre, Cardinal Wolsey, Cato.

“In these, I think, he is excelled by no actor I have yet seen on the stage.”

Early in February, Digges, ever on the look out for attractions, announced a grand masked ball to be given in the Theatre. Two years previous to this, namely, on January 15th, 1773, Lady Macdonald conceived the idea of holding a masquerade at her home of Duffhouse, and in spite of great opposition carried out her project. It was the first thing of the kind attempted in Scotland since the Reformation, and was accordingly much spoken about. Digges was present, dressed as a Dutch sailor,† and had there conceived the notion of getting up a similar thing by subscrip-

* In this character, Topham says Digges excelled Garrick.

† See *London Chronicle*, January 21st 1773. James Boswell was also present as a dumb conjuror. Dr Johnson writing to Boswell says, “I have heard of your masquerade ; what says your Synod to such innovations ?” See Boswell’s *Life of Johnson*.

tion. The scheme, however, when tried was not successful, and in a few days its announcement was withdrawn, and a *Ridotto* advertised to take its place, the difference being that masks were not worn nor fancy costumes used at the latter form of entertainment.

During the race season this year, the famous Miss Young or Younge was brought down from Drury Lane as the attraction; and the following winter season opened on December 6th, 1775. Mr Woods, who was still in the company, was to have taken a part in the new tragedy called *Barbarossa*, but he having a cold and sore throat the piece was changed. On December 26th, the new pantomime of *Harlequin from the Moon* was produced, with *Jane Shore* as a first piece. Mr Brown was Harlequin and Maria Teresa, Columbine. This piece was evidently a hit, and being always played as the after piece, some smart playgoers, to the number of sixty-two it seems, wrote to Digges urging on him the advisability of instituting "half-price." This solicitation Digges most politely but firmly declined; very pointedly remarking in his reply,* that if "ever what is called 'after price' is taken at the doors of this theatre, it must terminate in the inevitable ruin of the manager, particularly," he continues, "if he pays so ENORMOUS a Rent as the present manager is loaded with." This did not satisfy the agitators for reform, and something very like a riot occurred at the doors, through a crowd trying to force its way into the house without payment at all. On the following evening "proper officers" were placed, with orders to apprehend any offenders, and, probably for the first time here, pass-out checks were given to "Gentlemen wanting to go out between the acts." For several years previous to this a number of actors and actresses, notably Mr Stayley and Mrs Baker,† had made a livelihood by giving lectures on and teaching elocution, pronunciation of the English language, &c. This had been greatly overdone, and led to the following curious advertisement being inserted in the public press this spring:—

"At a period when the attention of the public is so laudably engaged in the study of the language of our sister kingdom; it is hoped it will not be deemed improper to pay some regard to that of our own: and that an effort to keep alive some of the first pieces of poetry that can adorn any language will meet with the approbation of those possessed in any degree of the Amor Patriæ, or who do not wish the Scotch name to sink into utter oblivion. Therefore on Friday next, the 15th March, in St Mary's Chapel,

MR YOUNG, ‡

will deliver a lecture on the Scottish Language."

* *Courant*, December 25th.

‡ Prompter at the theatre.

† She lived at this time in Mint Close.

Some time during the autumn of 1775, was published a very curious pamphlet, entitled the "Edinburgh Rosciad," which contains rhyming criticisms of the abilities of various members of the company then performing. It opens with a panegyric on Digges, and then, after giving some words of encouragement to Mills, who appears to have been a young actor of promise, it goes on to say :—

"Beynon's * some ease, and Nature's given him grace,
In person handsome, with a pleasing face.
If he the plaudits of the town does want,
Let him, when buskin'd, not to slide and rant.
Dutton † has merit in Tom Weston's cast ;
He's pretty good in Scrub, and Doctor Last.
Webb in most comic parts deserves applause ;
His easy air he all from Nature draws ;
But never let the Tragic Muse disgrace
Her verse heroic, with his vacant face.
Inchbald, the all-work player of the house,
Comes next to get his ditty from the muse ;
To-night he's *Jaffier*, *Henry*, or *Othello*,
To-morrow *Quixotte*, or a *Punchinello*."

Owens, "from Nature's got a marking face, but speaks with little judgment, little grace." Smith is described as "the genteelest in theatric lore"—"He's but beginning," but has a "handsome shape and person." Brown it seems, according to the rather ingenuous critic, "has a voice," but he advises him "to stretch it!" Hamilton is advised to take more pains and drink less gin! But Charteris, "for comic merit, need not yield, to any hero in theatric field." Dawson, it appears, is the "walking gentleman," and Hallion is strongly advised to leave the stage and become "a private man." Simpson, it seems, was "*sans* voice, *sans* action, *et sans* manly ease." Remington has the epithet "Red Hot" applied to him, and is advised to go back to the country, there to "rant and tear." Granger is "quite the coxcomb, with a face of brass," and Young is "last by far in the theatric rear." The ladies are next reviewed, and do not get much more consideration than the men. Mrs Inchbald, for instance, who was the leading lady, is allowed to be beautiful ; "but for want of requisites, the tragic muse doth fret and the comic sneer!"—"She whineth so her part, she's *water gruel* from the very heart!" Mrs Ramsay comes in for greater laudation, her voice being particularly commended. Mrs Simpson

* Leading Gentleman.

† Low Comedian.

lacks passion, while Mrs Webb is described as very useful and "sings very sweet." Mrs Remington extorts applause "in spite of her want of beauty." Miss Mills "is but young; when used to her trade, she may be clever in the chambermaid." But Mrs Saunders is strongly exhorted to carry her "barking" voice to a country town.*

A more than usually great attraction was reserved for this race season, Mr and Mrs Barry being engaged for ten performances. Their first piece was *The Grecian Daughter*, in which they played their original parts of Evander and Euphrasia, as acted by them at Drury Lane in 1772, and during the month they appeared in quite a number of capital parts.

The next season, which was to see a change in the management, opened on November 16th, 1776, with Miss Cately in a leading part. This lady's peculiar charm of vocalisation at once won the admiration of the Edinburgh public, and during her continuance here, which ended December 20th, she drew crowded houses. On her last appearance she introduced the following two verses into her famous song of "Push about the Jorum":—

"Tho' Juno bold
Can cuff and scold,
Yet, spite of all detractors,
When'er she's cool
Her golden rule
Is thanks to Benefactors.

With hand on heart
Before I part
In that heart's love I'll rank ye,
And grateful still,
Go where I will,
I'll ever thank ye!"

Before leaving town Miss Cately very kindly gave a special benefit for the Charity Workhouse, which drew a crowded house as well as a most complimentary letter of thanks from the treasurer of that institution. A notable production was Charles Dibdin's *Waterman*, on January 11th, 1777, for the first time in Scotland. This, the best known of Dibdin's many productions, was first brought out at the Haymarket in 1774, where, much to Garrick's chagrin, he having previously refused it, it proved a great success. The most extraordinary thing about this "Operetta," or rather "Ballad Opera," is, that in spite of all the ill-treatment it has received in the shape of cur-

* The usual annual benefit for the Charity Workhouse realised £145, 15s., a larger sum than had ever been drawn upon similar occasions.—*Weekly Magazine*, Ap. 1776, p. 160.

tailments, alterations, additions, &c., it not only still keeps the stage, but is popular to a degree not generally appreciated. It has in its time been terribly hashed, and Dibdin is made responsible for a number of songs which he did not write, but which are always included now. It is interesting to note, in comparison with the sums that are paid to authors and composers of comic operas now-a-days (Dibdin was his own librettist), that all Dibdin got for his share of the profit of a piece which in its time has netted many thousands of pounds to various people, was as follows :—

His benefit,	-	-	£35
Publication of words,	-		48
Do. of music,	-		30

£113

The grave of this remarkable man, who did so much to immortalise the “wooden walls” of old England, is suffered by the fourth generation of his countrymen to lie mouldering and neglected in a cemetery so dismal and unkempt, that it is now proposed to level the tombstones, and convert the place into a park or playground for the babies and nursemaids of Camden Town.

The Waterman became enormously popular here, and during the remaining part of the season was played many nights. The members of the company taking part in it were Messrs Richards, Jackson (not John Jackson), Dutton, Mrs Clagget, and Mrs Richards. While on the surface things were thus moving pleasantly along, the affairs of the theatre, and more particularly those of Mr Digges, were getting into a terrible pickle. His old debts (those he ran away from in 1764) he had been paying, or trying to pay by yearly instalments. As Bland, however, was surety for this arrangement as well as for the theatre rent, Digges, it can easily be imagined, did not worry himself much. For five years, however, he had contrived to keep his head above water; but finding the effort growing more and more irksome, he took out *cessio bonorum* in the end of January, and mustered up resolution to give himself up a prisoner in the Canongate Prison. He took leave of the public in a preamble at the head of the playbill for the 25th of the above month. In this he states that, “as the conduct and care of the theatre of this kingdom has been his invariable study, at the expense both of his health and *fortune*, he trusts that the generosity and candour of the audience (which he has so constantly experienced) will not desert him at this anxious and serious crisis.”

Digges soon found that prison walls were a restraint very irksome to one of his bohemian nature, so he gave* his jailor the slip, and accompanied by another man's wife set off for pastures new, bidding adieu for ever, as he thought, to Bonnie Scotland. The following letter was written by him before the crash, and shows that he was still, as of yore, anxious to keep up the tone of the performances.

"To Tate Wilkinson, Esq.

"As I presume you are come from London, I send to you to entreat you to turn your postchaise immediately towards this metropolis, where your presence will be (as it always will be to me) most welcome and acceptable.

"Some of the first personages here, and every friend I have, have long since advised me to wipe off a long score of old, and, I may add, imposing and fraudulent demands, by taking the benefit of the Scotch act of insolvency. I am now at last about to do so. This crisis will relieve me of many untoward straits, in which two large bail bonds, which I signed for Mrs Bellamy (who I shall ever mention with respect and compassion), continually involved me. A few days will end this matter. In the interim, as the season here is now beginning when money ever used to come into the house, I know no moment in which you can be of more substantial and critical use to YOURSELF or *me*; and that I may introduce your aid in the strongest and kindest manner possible, I will, when you come, tell the public, in whose favour I stand in the best light, that you visit this spot to support me in my *temporary difficulty*.

"I am certain, as Foote has not been here these two years, that you will attract the utmost notice; *but catch the tide of success*. I know you need no advice about the tide of kindness.

"Often, very often, have I repeated the favour to myself, of drinking the health you thank me for. Now you have no need to thank me for doing what I am sure was meant to be done without your hearing of it.

"I have a good company. When Douglas was under difficulties, he called upon Percy for his aid; and as Home's prologue says:—

"For Douglas, Percy bent his English bow."

So hasten with your abilities, which are arrows that never miss. I am, sincerely, your obedient,

"January 21st, 1777."

W. DIGGES.

His departure left Bland in a sorry plight, for at the time he stood in that gentleman's debt about £1300. In inviting Wilkinson, however, he had done the best thing possible, and it was lucky the York magnate was able to come and play "during Mr Digges' necessary absence from the stage!" as the bills set forth. Sheridan's *Rivals*, produced originally at Covent Garden in 1775, was first played here on March 12th 1777, but unfortunately the cast has not been preserved, and the season closed on April 19th.

The race week this year brought along with it the fascinating Mrs

* According to Lee Lewes, who is likely to be correct in this matter.

Abington (July 19th to 31st), and on August 3rd, she acted again for the "benefit of the performers." It may readily be believed by those acquainted with the extraordinary gifts this lady possessed, that she made herself extremely popular. The first portion of the succeeding winter season, 1777-8 was quite without events worth noting, until at the end of the year, the houses having been poor, Mr Bland found himself in arrears with his company, who promptly refused to act. An accommodation, however, was come to, and the performances were continued. Bland, for all that, was at his last gasp, and would readily have retired had he been able.

The production of the pantomime of *Harlequin Dr Faustus* this season is worth noting, if only for the fact that it was prepared and conducted under the superintendence of Mr West, the Sadler's Wells Clown, who had been specially brought down for the purpose. The cast was as follows:—Harlequin = Hallion; Pantaloon = Jackson; Maccaroni = Charteris; Infernal Spirit = Richards; Clown = West. West was the father of William West, musician, composer, actor, and manager, who, commencing his stage career as a child at the very beginning of the present century, only died as these sheets were going to press (February 1888); truly a veteran of the stage.

The season dragged on its weary length; only one bright ray making its appearance to gladden the managerial heart. It consisted of a performance with mock animals introduced on the stage, which attracted full houses and drew forth from a contemporary print the following:—

"For Edina polite, what a pity to say,
That the drama's neglected through every good play!
While a bill crammed with puffs every pocket unlocks,
And can fill to the brim both pit, gallery, and box!
But the actors have slyly now given us a touch;
Why not beasts for performers, when th' audience are such?
They have held up the mirror to show us our faces.
This honours the stage, while the town it disgraces."

At one time Bland thought he had found some one to take the concern off his hands. Mrs Baker, it seems, although doing an excellent business in teaching English, had all along pined to be manageress of the Theatre; and at last her ambition seemed likely of accomplishment, for she had found the necessary security. Bland too had agreed to the terms, and all was ready for sealing and signing. On the morrow that too would be done; but the morrow for the chief party concerned never dawned. The

excitement so greatly affected the poor lady that it arrested the action of her heart, and she died at the very moment of the realisation of her hopes. This was in the beginning of February, and she was laid in her grave sincerely lamented by many who knew her worth as a woman and as an actress.

The following lines were written upon her death, and published in the *Courant* of February 2nd.

ON THE DEATH OF MRS BAKER.

“ Ah ! cruel death, thou unrelenting foe !
 To taste and love, why giv'st thou such a blow ?
 Could'st thou no other find (on whom to try
 Th' unerring arm of thy artillery),
 But her, who, with a more than common art,
 To youth and age rich knowledge could impart ?
 Whose speech each grace of eloquence possest,
 While genuine wit was her convivial guest,
 Nor aught of female but the form was seen,
 For all her mental powers were masculine.
 As Shakspeare wrote, so she instruction gave ;
 Ruler of language, and not grammar's slave.
 But now, since gone to that uncertain bourn,
 From whence no travellers shall e'er return,
 Those left behind, when they their loss deplore,
 May aptly say, what Hamlet said of yore,
 Take her for all in all, and own 'twere vain
 To hope to look upon her like again.”

The following estimate of Mrs Baker's abilities, by Wilkinson,* is well worth insertion :—

“ Mrs Baker was a woman of strong understanding, aided by a good and highly finished education, wonderful natural abilities, and an actress of great capacity ; and she had performed three or four parts at Covent Garden, where they could not deny she possessed much merit. Her features were very good, but her figure was short, clumsy, and against her in many parts, which otherwise she was well calculated for. If a line had been drawn of competitorship, the first of that or the present day (1790), would have shrunk in the debate as to comprehension and real understanding, and yielded to her courtesy. Use is of greater importance than the London or any other audience are aware of. Mrs Pritchard was a striking instance, who, with a large figure, was esteemed the best Rosalind, though Mrs Woffington, the beautiful, was her opponent. Prejudice for some time prevailed much against Mrs Baker, at York, when she acted during the races in August, 1768, and one winter, 1769 ; but at the latter part of the season she surmounted those prejudices. At Edinburgh, where she resided many years, she was in universal esteem as an actress. But on a quarrel with Mr Digges (for her temper was soon ruffled, and she was too apt to rush into the different extremes of love and hate),

* Memoirs, vol. iii. p. 64.

she hastily quitted the stage, and then undertook the difficult task of teaching the English pronunciation ; for which she was not only capable but thoroughly qualified. In so doing, she received great promises and (what was better) great emoluments. She was received as a guest of knowledge and entertaining, lively conversation at the first tables in Edinburgh, which honours, at that city, would never without talents have been conferred."

At the conclusion of the season, on April 22nd, Mr Bland issued the following interesting balance sheet :—

" Theatre Royal, April 24th, 1778.

" To the Public.

"Some reports having been propagated, to the injury of Mr Bland, concerning the disbursements of this season's receipts, he thinks it highly necessary to lay the following state of the Theatrical finances before the public, in order to vindicate his character from so unjust and illiberal an aspersion :—

Received at the doors, - - - - -	£2058	17	0
Paid of Current Charges (exclusive of rent)	£1704	18	7
„ towards Actors' Arrears, - - -	-	78	15 3
„ to Current Rent, - - - - -	-	134	11 4
		<hr/>	1918 5 2
			<hr/>
	Balance in hand for Rent,		£140 11 10
Due to Actors, - - - - -	£99	4	5
„ Music, - - - - -	31	12	6
„ Servants, - - - - -	31	7	7
„ Rent, exclusive of what lies over for the races, - - - - -	174	16	10
	<hr/>		£337 1 4
			<hr/>

" N.B.—There is not a single article in the above statement but what relates to this season's expenses ; nor has Mr Bland received more than two guineas a-week for his trouble, which is included in the current charges."

A summer season, commencing July 4th, 1778, had for its attraction Mr Reddish, already mentioned in these pages, and for one night only Mr and Mrs Jackson, who were "accidentally" in Edinburgh. The following winter season opened, November 14th, 1778-9, with *As You Like It* and *Comus*—Mr Woods making his first appearance in the part of Jacques, and Mr Jennings from the Theatre Royal, Dublin, making his Edinburgh *debut*, in the part of Touchstone. On November 28th, was acted for the first time in Scotland, Sheridan's *School for Scandal*, the cast of which on this occasion was as follows :—Sir Peter = Mr Mills ; Sir Oliver = Mr Jennings ; Joseph = Mr Woods ; Crabtree = Mr Taylor ; Benjamin = Mr Hallion ; Rowley = Mr Webb ; Moses = Mr Baillie ; Careless = Mr Sparks ; Trip = Mr Lyon ; Charles = Mr Brown (from Theatre Royal, Bath) ; Maria =

Mrs Woods ; Mrs Candour = Mrs Sparks ; Lady Sneerwell = Mrs Melmoth ; Lady Teazle = Mrs Wilson.

This most pleasing of comedies evidently delighted the hearts of our playgoers, for it was played some thirteen or fourteen times during the season.

On December 12th, the play of *Zara* was performed here for the first time along with a new musical extravaganza, called *The Wives Revenged*,* the music of which was written by Mr Corri, a musician who had been for several years resident in Edinburgh, and who was in the regular habit of giving concerts in the St Cecilia Rooms. This gentleman must not be confounded with his son, who thirty-eight years afterwards gave the name of "Corri's Rooms" to the building then standing upon the site of our present Theatre Royal.

It seems that Bland, notwithstanding his protestations to the contrary, had really run into great arrears with his rent to Mr Ross ; and now, it is to be presumed, through utter inability to carry on the Theatre from want of funds, had to quit. All the *pros* and *cons* of this event are far from being clearly known, and will, no doubt, remain shrouded in obscurity till time, the revealer of most things, brings with its forward course some revelation of the particulars. Much interesting relative matter, however, may in the mean time be gleaned from the following dying speech, as it may be called, of Mr Bland :—

"Theatre Royal, Dec. 23rd, 1778.

"Mr David Ross, the proprietor of the patent for this city, having failed in every one of his own engagements to the gentlemen at whose expense the Theatre Royal was built, has, I hear (in order to excuse himself to them), circulated several reports to the prejudice of my character with regard to the payment of the Theatre rents. I therefore think it proper to lay the following short and true state of the case before the public. Mr Digges (through the means of my assigning over an annuity of £120 a year as security for the rent), will, including the current season, have possessed the theatre eight years. Mr Ross's *whole* rent during said period (allowing nothing for repairs, on which score Mr Digges has now a law plea depending) amounts to £4050, out of which he will actually have received, including the current year, which is part paid, and the rest secured ; I say, he will actually have received £3330. His own demanded balance is £720, in lieu of which he receives my annuity as forfeit next year, which by calculation is valued to above that sum, so that Mr Ross may in fact be said to have received more than his whole demand. He is now on the spot, and at liberty to deny any part of the above if he is able.

* This was most probably Charles Dibdin's one-act comic opera produced at Covent Garden in 1778. The music not being published, the management would find it cheaper to encourage local talent than to obtain the score from the composer.

"*N.B.*—Mr Ross brought but £400 with him to Scotland, and if the whole accounts of the Theatre since he possessed it were stated, it might be made appear, that he is between two and three thousand pounds in pocket, besides building the Theatre, purchasing the patent, and paying for his wardrobe.
"JOHN BLAND."

And so exit Bland by the back door, while Mr Corri enters by the front. The latter gentleman's name first appears publicly as manager in connection with a "Festino" he gave on March 12th. The pit was floored over, and there dancing was indulged in, while a sort of fancy fair was in full operation round the sides and in the boxes.* Mr Ross sustained a number of characters this season, his benefit being March 13th, 1779. This gentleman's performance of *Macbeth* was the occasion of the following pointed epigram, which was published in the *Courant* :—

"R——s made a sad mistake of late—
We grieve the matter to repeat,—
Aiming at Duncan (as 'tis said),
Macbeth he murdered in his stead !"

This drew forth the following reply :—

"The dying embers of poor Digges' merit,
Are kept alive by Bland's most ranc'rous spirit,
Who can abuse one aptly formed to please,
With grace of action, dignity, and ease ;
Who has a voice as musical and clear,
As ever pour'd upon the listening ear.
How shrunk and wither'd are thy Digges' bays,
How alter'd from thy former puffing days !
Where only at his shrine we find for praise,
A farthing candle darting paltry rays."

Despite Mr Ross's acting, Mr Corri's season turned out very badly. Concerts were given in the Theatre with equal want of success, and disputes arose between the manager and members of the Company over arrears of salary alleged to be due. Mrs Melmoth even went the length of publishing in the newspapers that she was going to take another benefit in consequence of Corri's failure to pay her salary. This Corri denied, and closed his doors for the season—his first and last—on May 15th.

A short summer season, opening on July 14th, followed ; Miss Younge, of Drury Lane, appearing as the particular attraction. There

* The admission to this was 10/6.

can be no doubt that for a number of years the prosperity and status of the Theatre had been declining. The companies engaged, although admittedly inferior each succeeding season, were more the result than the cause of this ; for, with salaries uncertain, good actors could scarcely be got to engage. The want of capital was a drawback which warped any show of enterprise, and the wardrobe, scenery and fittings were in a bad state. With the present season, however, it looked as if the warm glow of prosperity was about to radiate once again from our temple of Thespis, for Mr Wilkinson, now manager of the York circuit, appeared upon the scene as Lessee and Manager.* His opening announcement in the newspapers was very flowery in tone, and as events proved, did not promise more than he contrived, somehow or other, to perform. The season opened on December 18th, 1779, with the *Jealous Wife* ; and, although for some time he had an uphill battle to fight, his excellent management and liberality in regard to stage appointments soon attracted those who had temporarily refrained from theatre-going, and his punctual payment of salaries, despite bad houses at the beginning of the season, reassured the minds of the actors, and at the same time brought better talent to the Edinburgh Stage. By these means, the season, although without record of any great novelties being produced or famous actors appearing, proved eventually a success, and was closed on April 12th, with a benefit for the charity workhouse.

The summer season was announced to open on July 8th, but in the columns of the *Courant* of that date, Mr Wilkinson advertised as follows :—"Not any boxes having been engaged for this evening, Mr Wilkinson is apprehensive he has advertised plays too early before the races, and as it is impossible to open the theatre without a great and unavoidable expense, Mr Wilkinson is under the disagreeable necessity of postponing the play advertised for this evening till Tuesday next." The play was *Percy*, by Mrs Hannah More, and was produced accordingly, "to a very thin and *unbrilliant* audience,"† with the following cast :—Percy = Cummins, first appearance on this stage ; Earl of Raby = Inchbald, first appearance here ; Sir Hubert = Hallion ; Edric = Taylor ; Harcourt = Colby ; Douglas = Woods ; Birtha = Mrs Bailey ; Edwina = Mrs Inchbald. Two of these performers were new to Edinburgh, namely, Mr Cummins and Mr Inchbald. Of the former the *Courant* speaks with considerable

* He paid Ross £400 for the season, *Wandering Patentee*.

† *Courant*.

favour, although it goes on to say that "the loud rant at the conclusion of an impassioned speech, accompanied with an extravagant flourish of the right arm, sufficiently point out that this performer has not received his education at a London theatre, where those traps for applause have been long exploded." The acting of Mr Inchbald, who was a son of the former actor of that name on the Edinburgh Stage, was characterised as being "decently judicious"! Woods, in the same play, acted with "spirit, judgment, and ease," while it is curious to find Mrs Inchbald criticised in almost the same terms as in the "Edinburgh Rosciad," already quoted. "Mrs Inchbald," the *Courant* says, "we are sorry to observe, possesses few other qualifications as an actress than an elegant figure and a beautiful countenance."

Mr Lewis of Covent Garden, who appears to have been the principal actor in this Summer company, is objected to by the critic quoted above, because his style of delivery, unlike the slow and pompous utterance rendered so familiar by Digges in Edinburgh, was rapid and simple, and "in many instances ran too trippingly upon the tongue."

Mrs John Jackson took a benefit in July, when a piece by her husband, entitled *Tony Lumpkin's Rambles Through Edinburgh*, was produced, and on July 26th, another piece by Jackson was played. This time his work was of a much more ambitious character, being nothing less than a tragedy entitled *William Wallace*. Of this production the *Courant* says:—"We should have been happy to have informed our readers that the character of Wallace had received additional lustre on the stage; but sorry are we to say, he is little more than the ghost of that Wallace who shines so conspicuously in history." This sweeping criticism called forth a furious reply from the author of the play; but, like many similar effusions from the same pen during the next twenty-five years, was as conspicuously lacking in wit as it was full of wrath.

Upon the whole it is questionable if the summer season paid Mr Wilkinson, and it was perhaps with a considerable feeling of pleasure that he announced his regret at having to relinquish the theatre to Mr Ross, who had entered into partnership with Mr Heaphy for the approaching winter.

An exceedingly interesting letter appeared in the columns of the *Courant* of December 18th 1780, which, although not exclusively relating to the theatre, is well worth insertion:—

"SIR,—As I was sauntering over the Bridge last Saturday evening, I was struck with the appearance of a playbill at the Post-Office, filled with names I had never seen or heard of

though I have attended every theatrical revolution in London and Edinburgh for these twelve years past. This was an attack upon my finances, for which I was totally unprepared ; for the *frugality* of the manager, I suppose, prevented him from communicating it to the public by the usual channel of a newspaper. I instinctively began to consult my purse upon the costs and damages, and recollected that no less a sum than three shillings would procure me a place in the pit or boxes. ‘3s.’ I said, as I turned them over in my hand, ‘why what a multitude of things may be done with 3s. For 3s. you may be an extraordinary subscriber of “Sibbald’s”;—for a month, riot in the extensive regions of literature, and read “four books at a time”;—you may ride from Edinburgh to Leith and from Leith to Edinburgh twelve times for 3s.;—for 3s. you may six times expose yourself at the Pantheon, where you may join the motley group of *illiterati*, discourse with confidence on subjects you do not understand, and join absurdities together like cherries upon a stick;—every oyster cellar, tippling house, &c., is open to 3s.;—nay, it will go a great way towards procuring a seat in the New Kirk, where you may sit in company with the Lord Provost and Magistrates.’ I was roused from this economical reverie by the appearance of a female acquaintance going to the Theatre; frugality gave me the slip, and gallantry carried the day. There was nothing remarkable in the audience; the lower part of the house was genteel, though not numerous, and the higher boxes were as usual occupied by the sisters of frailty. But how, Sir, shall I describe the performers: our last set was barely decent; the present is, in my opinion at least, infinitely inferior.”

The season appears to have opened about January 6th 1781, on which date, Mr Wilks, from Dublin, performed for the first time in Edinburgh. On February 12th, Edinburgh’s old favourite Digges appeared again, and seems to have been well received. On the following day there is evidence in the pages of the *Courant* that his familiar style of pompous puffing was still practised by him. He addresses the public as follows:—

“The extraordinary marks of favour and applause with which I was honoured by a most brilliant and crowded audience on my first appearance on this stage on Monday last, claim on my part the MOST PUBLIC acknowledgment for so flattering, so distinguished, a reception. Every return in my humble power can be but a poor equivalent for favours heaped upon me for a number of years with such continued attachment and generosity. I beg leave to add that a just sense of your kindness (so far beyond my merits) can only terminate with the life of your ever obliged and most obedient humble servant,

“WEST DIGGES.”

Digges must have made his last bow to an Edinburgh audience some time in February; how he contrived to live in that city without being arrested is astonishing, and further shows the confidence—not to say impudence—that he possessed in such liberal proportions.

From Edinburgh he went to London, and appeared at the Haymarket during the summer.* From London he went to Dublin, and remained

* Genest.

there until, during the summer of 1784, he was seized with a paralytic stroke, while rehearsing with Mrs Siddons ; after which he never again acted.

After this terrible calamity had overtaken Digges, a benefit was organised for him at Dublin, and Mrs Siddons played in it. She was afterwards publicly accused of having charged Digges for her services, and this led to her being hissed upon her re-appearance on Drury Lane stage. Digges, after showing some reluctance, was at length prevailed upon to deny that he had paid her anything, and so her character was vindicated. The circumstances need not be given in full, as they do not directly relate to the matter in hand.* What will prove more interesting is a letter from Charles Kirkpatrick Sharpe to Mr Maidment, which has never hitherto been published, and which is full of curious matter, not only relating to Digges but to the Edinburgh Stage in general. †

“MY DEAR SIR,

“Sunday Night, 20th January 1833.

“I return you your curious stage vol., and two more which you were so good as to lend me. I perceive from your cuttings that both friend and foe deemed Digges a stiff tragedian ; and Mr Thomson tells me, that when he appeared in London, his acting was thought old-fashioned. Mr T. saw him in all his principal parts, but could give me little material information. He acted Hamlet in a sort of military uniform, and Macbeth in a Highland dress. His face was extremely handsome, and he was perfectly well shaped : he possessed the air noble (all the Delawares I ever saw had it) so as to be remarkable, even on the streets. My mother describes him as about the common height ; with a high nose, and very fine teeth ; dark brown hair and a very powerful voice. His singing in the *Beggars' Opera* was admired by Lord Kellie, and all the best judges of music here.

“Mrs Ward, my mother says, was a middle-sized woman, with a fair complexion (there is little certainty about the complexion of players) and rather pretty. From conversations between my father and mother long ago (the memory of the latter is now much enfeebled), I remember concluding that Mrs Bellamy and Mrs Baker were in much higher esteem here. My father never talked of Mrs Ward as anything extraordinary. What follows is what I recollect concerning other actresses. Mrs Bellamy trod the stage always like a woman of rank ; her voice was powerful, yet uncommonly plaintive when she pleased (Dr Dodd mentions, ‘the plaintive voice of Bellamy’). She had high features, and her face was red. When here, she was the most extravagant fool possible ; so that she hired porters to carry her canary birds from Edinburgh to Glasgow. Digges and she resided in a house near the toll-gate, on the Newhaven Road. The house remains. They dined by candle light in the middle of summer. She could not sing, but once played Mrs Hammiken here, in *Beggars' Opera*, with great applause. I don't know if you ever saw that character in the castrated skeleton of the present day. I will describe the way I remember it acted when we meet. Mrs Baker excelled everybody in Lady Macbeth. There is a portrait of Mrs Ward in Rowe's tragedy of *Rodo*, in Bell's British Theatre. I never saw a print of Digges, but I remember very well a picture (by Runciman)

* For particulars, see Genest, vol. vi., pp. 205 and 329.

† By the courtesy of J. Mansfield Mackenzie, Esq., W.S., in whose collection the MS. is preserved.

of him in the character of King Lear, which hung long in Martin's sale-room, many years ago ; it latterly became the property of Mr Walker, and was sold, among his other rubbish, in London for 18 shillings. It gave one no notion of the actor's face, if I remember right, as the mouth and chin were muffled in an immense white beard, which, mingled with a copious white periwig, 'rode on the whirlwind' over the unlucky canvas. It was a shocking daub, though I dare swear David Laing or Mr Sievewright would now give a great price for it.

"Here is all (and nothing at all) I have got to tell you about the Theatrical Lovers. I send my volume of playbills. My mother says, that whenever the *Gentle Shepherd* was acted here in her youth, people were in convulsions of laughter at the bad Scotch pronounced by the English players. I'll warrant the compliment was returned in other places. When you have written your preface, if you will allow me a perusal, perhaps I may be able to furnish some trifling hints.

"Meanwhile, believe me ever, Dear Sir,

"Very sincerely yours,

"CHAS. KIRKPATRICK SHARPE."

On February 21st a benefit was given for the building of a new High School in Edinburgh, and on April 9th the theatre closed for the winter season.

It may be mentioned that Heaphy, who shared the management this year, had long been manager of the Cork Theatre, and was an honourable gentleman,* besides being well experienced in his business. The season turned out very badly, and on one of the last nights Ross went clandestinely to the doors, took away the whole receipts of the house, and himself directly afterwards to London.

The opening of the Theatre for the summer season is of particular interest, since Kemble—the great John Kemble,—made his first appearance in Edinburgh, on the first night, July 23rd.

Heaphy and Ross were both away, and Wilkinson had come from York to open the theatre during the race week, bringing Kemble, who at that time was in his company. The opening piece was *The Toy Shop*, in which Kemble played the Master of the Toy Shop. On the same evening Suett from Drury Lane appeared as Tipple in *The Flitch of Bacon*. On July 24th, Kemble played Contrast in the *Lord of the Manor*, and Puff in the *Critic*. On July 30th was given, *New Way to Pay Old Debts*, "for the first time." Sir Giles = Kemble ; Arable = Chalmers ; Justice Greedy = Bailey ; Wellborn = Cummins ; Margaret = Mrs Chalmers ; Lady Allworth = Miss Scarce.

On August 4th, Wilkinson took his benefit, and the theatre was closed, to be reopened in the winter by a new manager, who for a quarter of a century exercised a most potent influence—partly good and partly bad—upon the Edinburgh stage.

* Lee Lewes, vol. iii. p. 81.

CHAPTER XII.

JACKSON'S REIGN.



IN that most pompous and inaccurate work by John Jackson, facetiously entitled a "History of the Scottish Stage," the author, who in 1781 became manager of the Edinburgh Theatre, states that he purchased the theatre from Ross for an annuity of £150 *per annum*, with an undertaking to pay arrears of interest due to the proprietor-shareholders, and also the debts and incumbrances on the building, &c. "This transaction," says Jackson, "took place at London, November 10th, 1781." * Somewhat different is the version given by Lee Lewes,† who alleges that, after Ross had decamped to London, Jackson took advantage of his absence to bring an action against him for wages alleged to be due. Having obtained judgment, he went to London with the warrant in his pocket, and used it effectually in imposing his own terms on the bankrupt proprietor and patentee. Whichever story is correct, Jackson certainly got the theatre on advantageous terms, and immediately issued a long address "to the Public," in which, with much pompous servility of phrase, he promised nearly everything. It must be allowed that he considerably repaired the theatre, a step no doubt absolutely necessary, and got some new scenery, dresses, &c. As for the lavish promises he made, the most that can be said for him is, that he kept the theatre in a rather better state of efficiency than his predecessors.

Jackson says:—

‡ "I must remind the public of Edinburgh of the situation in which I found the theatre. I cannot devise any thing so wretched. There were neither scenes, wardrobe, or any other appendage suitable to a Theatre Royal. There was not even a roof; the thing so called was like a sieve, which let the rain through in a million of places.

"With the house in this deranged state, I commenced manager. From the engage-

* Hist. Scot. Stage, pp. 76 and 82. † Memoirs, vol. iii. p. 82. ‡ Hist. Scot. Stage, p. 179.

ments my predecessor had entered into, comprising a list of many respectable names, but not one that possessed the powers of attraction, or, in the theatrical phrase, that was a *drawing object*, I lost from two to three hundred pounds; and before the end of the year, with painting, machinery, wardrobe, decorations, and repairs, I was above a thousand pounds in advance."

Evidently Mrs Bulkley's was one of the "respectable names" referred to. Ross had engaged her as "lead," but in that capacity she stood in Mrs Jackson's way; so John, being a dutiful husband, shelved Mrs Bulkley, and gave the best of her parts, such as Letitia Hardy, Lady Teazle, &c., to his wife. Mrs Bulkley's patience becoming exhausted, she wrote to the papers,* saying that Jackson had not kept his engagement with her, and so forth, to which he replied with a flat contradiction. He allowed that he had implemented Ross's engagement, and explained that he had only taken good parts from Mrs Bulkley when he found that she failed to draw houses in them even on "good playing nights," that he had not cast her to act on the "weak" nights, as she alleged, and he charged her with filling the house with "paper," a practice which others of the company had indulged in until stopped by the management.

Jackson's statement that Mrs Bulkley did not draw can scarcely be credited, looking to the laudation in prose and verse of her merits as an actress that appeared in great quantities in the columns of the *Courant* and other papers. The dispute must have been made up, for the letters suddenly stop, and subsequently we find Mrs Bulkley playing Rosalind, Miss Hardcastle, &c.

The Theatre Royal opened under the new management on December 1st, 1781, with *The Suspicious Husband*, but it appears to have been closed again shortly and reopened about the middle of January 1782. In the interval, Jackson opened a new theatre he had built in Dunlop Street, Glasgow, on January 9th, 1782.† To run the Edinburgh and Glasgow houses simultaneously showed great enterprise on the part of the lessee, who even contrived to get some of the members of his company to play at both places. This, however, was rendered feasible by the fact that the Edinburgh nights of playing were never more than four, and often only three, while two seems to have been the weekly allowance in Glasgow. The fact, however, remains, and proves Jackson at this time to have been no sluggard.

* *Courant*, January 29th, 1782.

† Jackson says January 7th, 1781. The correct date is taken from the *Courant*. For a long account of this theatre, see *History of Scottish Stage*, p. 113.

February 12th, 1782, *Romeo and Juliet*.—Romeo = Ward ; Friar Lawrence = Banks ; Capulet = Johnson ; Friar John = T. Banks ; Peter = Hollingsworth ; Starved Apothecary = Charteris ; Mercutio = Hallion ; Nurse = Mrs Charteris ; Juliet = Mrs Ward.

The Mrs Ward mentioned here came originally from Liverpool,* where she had developed from a mantua-maker to an actress. During the season 1780-1, she and her husband had gone to Drury Lane ; they were in Edinburgh during this season ; and in 1782-3, she returned to Drury Lane, where she stayed many years. Mrs Ward seems to have been a most useful actress, but her husband was not of much account.† During this season Jackson's *Eldred* was revived with success (*i. e.*, it was played several times—whether to money or not is questionable), and on April 1st, Mr Nicholson Stewart, “Edinburgh's amateur,” played Chamont in *The Orphan*.

April 8th, *Cymbeline*.—Posthumus Leonatus = Ward ; Iachimo = Woods ; Queen = Mrs Mountfort ; Helen = Mrs Charteris ; Imogen = Mrs Bulkley ; with a new farce never yet performed, called the *Fortune Hunter*, or, *A Trip to the Lighters*, written by a gentleman of this city.

April 20th, *Rivals*.—Sir Anthony Absolute = Johnson ; Captain Absolute = Woods ; Sir Lucius = Hallion ; Acres = Ward (first time) ; Miss Lydia Languish = Miss Kirby ; Mrs Malaprop = Mrs Charteris ; Julia = Mrs Bulkley. Another row occurred over Williamson's benefit, for which that gentleman wished to advertise Mrs Bulkley as appearing for the last time in Scotland. This did not suit Jackson, and so a paper warfare was waged in the columns of the *Courant*. From the correspondence, we learn that the charge for a benefit was thirty-five pounds. The winter season closed about May 10th, to reopen however on June 8th, when the members of Jackson's company, who had been specially retained in Glasgow during the winter, appeared. Among their number were Mrs Walcot and Mrs Sparks, while Leoni the tenor appeared for several nights. This after season closed in the beginning of August 1782.

The winter season opened on January 8th (1783), with *The Brothers*, by desire of the Grand Master Mason of Scotland. On the 11th was played *Othello*, with the following cast :—Othello = Grist, his first appear-

* Thespian Dictionary, and Genest.

† Thespian Dictionary, which seems to be correct.

ance in Scotland ; Iago = Woods ; Desdemona = Miss Farren,* her first appearance in this kingdom. On the Monday following (13th), *Hamlet*. —Hamlet = Grist ; Ghost = Woods ; Queen = Mrs Burden ; Player Queen = Mrs Mountfort ; and Ophelia = Miss Farren. On February 1st, *The School for Fathers* was presented, with Fowler as Colonel Oldboy, and the famous Mrs Baddeley from the Theatre Royal, Drury Lane, as Clarissa,—being her “ first appearance in this kingdom ” †

Mrs Baddeley had not acted in London since the conclusion of the season 1780–81. She very probably came to Edinburgh direct from York, where she had enjoyed great popularity in such parts as Clarissa, Polly, Rosetta, and Imogen, which she acted extremely well. Genest ‡ relates that, on taking her last benefit at York, she almost entirely lost credit with the audience, for besides being very lame, she was so stupidly intoxicated with laudanum that it was with great difficulty she finished the performance. She had fallen a complete prey to her craving for opium, which, combined with extreme irregularity of living, brought about a speedy death. It is said that, although she seldom tasted food, her complexion retained its beauty to the end. On February 5th, Mrs Baddeley played Ophelia to the Hamlet of Grist, with the part of the Player Queen by Mrs Charteris. On the 10th, Lamash from Drury Lane appeared for the first time here, playing Belcour in *The West Indian*.

An extremely interesting paragraph in the *Caledonian Mercury* of February 12th, 1783, informs us that “ George Saville Carey, from London, will begin his lecture on mimicry at the Lower Room, St Mary’s Chapel, on Thursday, at seven o’clock ; the whole to conclude with the examination of a stage candidate in the manner of the late Mr Garrick, and a dialogue in the Shades between Messrs Foote and Weston. Admittance, 2s.”

This entertainment by the maternal grandfather of the great Edmund Kean, was so successful as to be repeated on several occasions, both at Mary’s Chapel and the Old Assembly Rooms.

The theatre was closed from the 12th to the 22nd of March, during which interval the company went to Glasgow, and played in Jackson’s new theatre. On their return Mrs Jackson took her benefit on March 24th,

* This could not possibly have been the famous Miss Farren who became Countess of Derby.

† Genest says she acted with Wilkinson at York in 1783, and joined the Edinburgh company in 1783-4. He is wrong however in this statement.

‡ Vol. vi. p. 185.

when Mrs Cowley's *Which is the Man?* was played. Lord Sparkle = Grist ; Pendragon = Moss ; Miss Pendragon = Mrs Jackson ; Julia = Miss Farren.

On Wednesday, March 26th, "by desire of a Lady of Distinction," *The Way to Keep Him*. Lovemore = Woods ; Mrs Lovemore = Mrs Baddeley.

For Mrs Cornleys' benefit on April 2nd, *The Jealous Wife*. Harriet = Mrs Baddeley ; Mrs Oakly = Mrs Cornleys ; with an address written and spoken by Mrs Cornleys.

For the benefit of Mrs Moss, Monday, April 7th, *The Generous Freemason*. Concluding with an Epilogue in the character of a Freemason's wife, by Mrs Sparks.

On April 9th, for the benefit of Mr Woods, *Cymbeline*. Posthumus Leonatus = Woods, his first appearance in that character ; Imogen = Mrs Baddeley.

On April 16th, for a charitable purpose, was performed *Venice Preserved*. Pierre by H. Nicholson Stewart, Esq., with an Epilogue ; Belvidera by Mrs Jackson.

Mrs Baddeley's night was on April 26th, when was played *School for Scandal*. Sir Peter Teazle = Johnson ; Joseph Surface = Woods ; Charles = Ward ; and Lady Teazle, with an epilogue in character, "wrote by a gentleman of this city," = Mrs Baddeley ; with the *Maid of the Oaks*, Lady Bab Lardoon = Mrs Baddeley, in which she will introduce the air of "No Flower that Blows." Tickets to be had of Mrs Baddeley, at Mrs Cumings, Scale Stairs, Dickson's Close, the Exchange.

On May 3rd, for the benefit of Miss Farren, *Jane Shore*. Jane Shore = Mrs Baddeley ; and the season closed on May 8th with *Hamlet*.

The summer season opened on July 12th, when was produced for the first time here, the Comic Opera of *The Castle of Andalusia*. Pedrillo = Ryder, from the Theatre Royal, Dublin ; and Catalina = Mrs Baddeley. Ryder only played until the 26th, on which evening *Rule a Wife and Have a Wife* was performed ; Ryder as the Copper Captain and Mrs Jackson as Estifania, being her first appearance in that character. The season closed on July 30th, with *Love in a Village*. Young Meadows = Tannett ; Madge = Miss Farren ; Lucinda = Mrs Henderson ; Deborah Woodcock = Mrs Charteris ; Rosetta = Mrs Baddeley.

No more performances were given until the opening of the winter season on January 3rd, 1784, with *Love in a Village* ; Rosetta by Miss Morris, from Covent Garden, her first appearance here.

On January 10th, the comedy of *A Bold Stroke for a Husband*, by Mrs Cowley, was played for the first time in Edinburgh. It had been a great success when produced at Covent Garden the preceding February, but Jackson was scarcely warranted in advertising it as "now performing at Covent Garden," in January 1784! The cast in Edinburgh was:—Don Julio = Cautherley; Don Cæsar = Johnson; Don Garcia = Sutherland; Don Vincentio = Tannett; Don Vasquez = Sparks; Gaspar = Davis; Don Carlos = Woods; Donna Victoria = Mrs Wilmont Wells; Donna Laura = Mrs Woods; Minette = Mrs Sparks; Donna Olivia = Miss Morris.

On the 24th, *Rosina* was given for the first time here. William = Moss; Captain Belville = Bell; Belville = Tannett; Phœbe = Mrs Sparks; Dorcas = Mrs Mountfort; Rosina = Miss Morris.

February 23rd, *Merchant of Venice*. Shylock = Collins; Launcelot = Moss; Jessica (with songs) = Mrs Henderson; Portia = Mrs W. Wells. With the burletta *Tom Thumb the Great*, "never acted here." Lord Grizzle = Moss; Tom Thumb = Master Charteris; Princess Huncamunca = Mrs Henderson.

On March 3rd, "to a most brilliant and crowded audience, the tragedy of *Venice Preserved* was played for the benefit of the widow of Dr Smollett, the celebrated author of 'Roderick Random,' &c. The lady resides at present in Italy."* A prologue, made up of sentiments quoted from Smollett's works, was spoken by H. Nicholson Stewart.

Woods took his benefit on April 17th, and played a new farcical interlude called *Hallow Fair* (never yet acted), and Moss acted the Croaker in the *Good Natured Man* on the 19th, for his own benefit, along with a new comical interlude, called *The Good Woman Without a Head*, and other attractions.

But the event of the season, and, indeed, one of the most noteworthy occurrences in the whole history of the Scottish Stage, was the engagement and first appearance in Scotland of Mrs Siddons. Only the season previous this great actress had burst upon the astonished Londoners in the zenith of her tragic greatness. She had performed with Garrick many years before, at Drury Lane, but did not get, at that time, parts which suited her. Garrick is said to have been jealous of her abilities, fearing she might throw his acting into the shade. From whatever cause it was, she threw up her engagement, and did not reappear in the metropolis till 1782, when, as already said, her success was instantaneous and complete. The

* *Courant*.

news of her triumph soon reached Edinburgh, and Jackson, having been backed up by some advocates to the extent of £200, consented to offer her an engagement. His own account is that he offered Mrs Siddons £200 from himself and £200 of guarantee money. This offer did not meet Mrs or rather Mr Siddons' views, and the latter wrote stating he would prefer half the profits and a free benefit. This was agreed to, and Jackson evidently concluded that the £200 guarantee would, by the new arrangement, fall to his share; but Mr Siddons appears to have been an excellent business man, keenly alive to the advantage of drawing in all the money he could honestly lay hands on, and in this particular case he contrived to secure the guarantee fund before Mr Jackson had even thought of applying for it. It must have been with a sore heart that the manager, long afterwards, in his capacity of Historian, set down the following memorandum of the sum actually netted by Mrs Siddons for her nine performances and benefit. The statement is as follows :—

MRS SIDDONS' RECEIPTS.

Nine nights' receipts, -	-	-	£467	7	7
From the gentlemen's subscriptions, -	-	-	200	0	0
Clear benefit, -	-	-	180	0	0
Presents by plate and gold tickets,* say,			120	0	0
			<hr/>		
			£967	7	7

Almost before the terms were concluded, rumours of Mrs Siddons' engagement got about, and the matter excited great interest even before it was publicly advertised. The guarantors naturally thought themselves entitled to some preference in the choice of seats but, although a meeting was called on the subject, no particular result followed, and these gentlemen were eventually satisfied with being let into the pit before the doors were opened for the general public. The booking in advance appears to have been great, and many persons were unable to get places even before Mrs Siddons arrived. She appeared on May the 22nd, and from that day the scenes that took place in front of the theatre baffle description, and the details of them read almost like romance. Enormous crowds attended hours before the performance, for the chance of getting in, and when, to oblige the crowds, they were admitted at 3 o'clock, they began to assemble at 12. The guarantors thought themselves fortunate in having private

* It is not quite clear what Jackson means by "gold tickets."

access to the pit. The General Assembly of the Church of Scotland found it necessary to arrange their meetings with some reference to the hours at the theatre, for the members, particularly the younger ones, flocked to the play-house to get lessons in elocution. People came even from Newcastle to see this wonderful actress, and on one particular day 2557 applications were made for 630 places. To get at the box-office betimes porters and servants encamped on the street over night, and the military, whose bayonets were sometimes dyed a suspicious hue after the crush, were necessary to guard the gallery door. A sailor climbing in at a window said that he no sooner got in at the *port hole* than he got knocked on the head and tumbled down the *hatchway*. London thieves actually found it to their profit to come all the way from town ; such a harvest of wigs, hats, canes, snuff-boxes, purses, and watches never was gathered with greater ease.

One incident that happened inside the theatre, although often told, is worth repeating. On the evening that the *Fatal Marriage* was performed, Mrs Siddons was so carried away by the emotions incidental to the part, that when the curtain fell she had to be assisted off the stage. Such acting had a wonderful effect upon the audience. A young heiress—Miss Gordon of Gight, in Aberdeenshire,—was carried out of her box in hysterics, screaming loudly the words caught from the great actress—“Oh my Biron! my Biron!” Chambers says that several people who were in the theatre that night declared they never forgot the ominous sounds, “Oh my Biron!” A year afterwards this Miss Gordon met, for the first time, the Hon. John Biron, who paid his addresses to and eventually married her. It was for her a fatal marriage in several respects, although it gave to the world the poet Lord Byron.

Regarding the crowds that collected in front of the theatre, one more anecdote, related at the time as a fact, may be told. A young lady passing by, on the way to drink tea with a friend, was caught in the crowd and presently found herself in the pit of the theatre, from which she was only extricated by being lifted on to the stage.

The pieces performed by Mrs Siddons were as follows :—May 22nd, *Venice Preserved*; May 24th, *The Gamester*; May 26th, *Venice Preserved*; May 27th, *The Gamester*; May 29th, *Mourning Bride*; June 1st, *Douglas*; June 3rd, *Isabella, or, The Fatal Marriage*; June 5th, *Jane Shore*; June 7th, *Jane Shore*; June 9th, *Grecian Daughter*, for her benefit; June 10th, *Grecian Daughter*; June 11th, *Euphrasia*, for the benefit of the charity workhouse.

Thomas Campbell gives the following account, repeated from her own, of the reception Mrs Siddons had upon her first appearance in Edinburgh:—

“The grave attention of my Scottish countrymen,” says he, “and their canny reservation of praise till they were sure she deserved it, had well nigh worn out her patience. She had been used to speak to animated clay ; but now she felt as she had been speaking to stones. Successive flashes of her elocution, that had always been sure to electrify the south, fell in vain on these northern flints. At last, as I well remember, she told me she coiled up all her powers to the most emphatic possible utterance of one passage, having previously vowed in her heart that if *this* could not touch the Scotch, she would never again cross the Tweed. When it was finished, she paused, and looked to the audience. The deep silence was broken only by one voice exclaiming, ‘*That’s no’ bad!*’ This ludicrous parsimony of praise convulsed the Edinburgh audience with laughter. But the laugh was followed by such thunders of applause that, amidst her stunned and nervous agitation, she was not without fear of the galleries coming down.”

Professor Wilson once remarked that he would have considered this anecdote a terrible condemnation of the taste and feeling of his countrymen, were it not that the *laugh* showed civilisation had made some way among them.

Regarding Mrs Siddons’ first performance, the *Courant* of the following Monday spoke as follows :—

“Mrs Siddons played the part of Belvidera to a very crowded and genteel audience. We may with truth say that she fully gratified the very high expectations that were formed of her. Her wonderful powers were particularly eminent in the mad scene, which in ordinary hands is in general unnatural and disgusting. Her wild scream pierced the heart in a manner not to be believed. It conveyed at once the accumulated idea of the deepest horror, agony, and despair. There is little wonder that some ladies fainted at this part.”

On June 12th, the *Courant* says that—“Mrs Siddons’ taking leave of the audience was the most ‘expressive silence’ we ever beheld. It elegantly spoke gratitude, respect, and affection.” And in the same paper she herself published the following :—

“Mrs Siddons confesses she has not words enough to express the feelings she entertains of her reception in this city ; but humbly hopes she may be understood by this brief but sincere silence, that she is grateful for all favours, and will ever hold them dear in her remembrance.”

So ended, in the most brilliant manner possible, the season 1783-4.

She left the same day for Dublin. In connection with her journey thither, the following extract from a letter by the Rev. Dr Mackenzie, sixty-three years minister of Portpatrick, is decidedly interesting :—

“I shall give you one instance of her (Mrs S.’s) amazing sensibility. . . . Our village consists of a natural crescent facing the sea, bounded by rocks, and a range of hills in

the background. When she came to the shore to embark, and raised her eyes to throw a parting look, I suppose, at Scotland, the wildness of the scenes about her,—the rocks, the seas, and perhaps the primitive appearance of the natives,—rushed upon her so powerfully that she heaved a deep sigh, and, looking terrified for a moment, to our utter astonishment, she emitted all at once one of her wild cries. The effect was powerful beyond description; the rocks, the shore, and the concave conveyed the echoes. There was a general rush from the houses scattered along the beach. Seeing men, women, and children so alarmed, she herself apparently became more terrified; she repeated the cry, and actually screamed aloud. It was melancholy, and was mournful, and was piercingly loud. In a moment, as if by a sudden shock, or through the influence of some supernatural agency, the whole of the people lamented and sobbed aloud. Such a scene I never witnessed. There happened, singular to say, at that instant to pass a burial; the village bell tolled. The dismal notes of the agitated people, with the tolling of the bell, and the howling of the bellman, as is the custom here, were all mingled together. But when she repeated these words, I then saw the scene she had in view:—

‘Methinks I stand upon some naked beach,
Sighing to winds, and to the seas complaining,
While afar off the vessel sails away
In which my treasure and my soul’s embarked!’

You might have seen the sailors involuntarily put their hands to the ropes, hoist the sails, and weigh the cables. One vessel actually sailed off, and the other would have followed if her husband had not interposed. ‘Come,’ says he, ‘my dear, what is all this for? You don’t propose to swim to Ireland. Egad, if you don’t make haste, the vessel will sail absolutely.’”

The Rev. Doctor continues after a bit:—

“The husband of the great actress seems to be a good, plain sort of a man. One thing with regard to him is rather remarkable. I asked him, when his wife was in one of her tragic fits, whether he was affected equally with the rest of the audience. ‘Why, really,’ says he, ‘I have often wondered at myself in this particular. When she cries, I laugh. I cannot for the soul of me help it. And when she or her audience are grave, I am always near crying. I remark this of myself invariably. Besides,’ says he, ‘do you know that small beer is good for crying? The day that my wife drinks small beer, she cries amazingly; she is really pitiful. But if I was to give her porter, or any stronger liquor, she would not be worth a farthing.’”

The Theatre opened again for a few weeks in the summer, during which, on July 31st, Henderson the tragedian made his first appearance in Scotland, the play being *Hamlet*. August 2nd, he played Shylock; August 3rd, Sir John Falstaff in *Merry Wives*. On the first evening of his appearance the house was only “respectable,” but by the third night it was so crowded that the *Courant* says one might have thought Siddons was still acting. Henderson’s Falstaff is described in the same place as being excessively humorous,* so much so that one gentleman nearly

* See portrait in Kay’s Portraits.

laughed himself into convulsions. The performance of Hamlet is compared with Digges', "who played," says the *Courant*, "with little judgment; was very deficient in the nicer touches of the art, and often had no conception of what he spoke. In judgment and taste, Henderson is eminent. He understands perfectly the character he plays, and never fails to give the just meaning of his author; and this, in so difficult and various a character as Hamlet, requires the power of a master."

August 7th, *Macbeth*, in which Henderson seems to have worn a Spanish dress, with a piece of tartan drawn across the shoulder in the manner of the insignia of an order of knighthood.

August 8th, Falstaff in *King Henry IV.*, first part, for his benefit; 10th, Richard III.; 14th, King Lear; 16th, Sir Giles Overreach.

On August 18th, "Mr Henderson before leaving this city begs leave most respectfully to express his grateful sense of the indulgent and liberal patronage he has received from the public of Edinburgh, and to assure them that he shall ever retain a lively remembrance of the polite and flattering attention with which they have been pleased to honour him." *

The winter season opened on January 8th, 1785, with *The Suspicious Husband*. The company was a strong one, particularly in ladies. Mrs Bulkley reappeared, and Mrs Baddeley, although greatly enfeebled by disease, was still available. Mrs Yates joined for a month in the spring, and Mrs W. Wells and Mrs Jackson both acted leading parts.

Mrs Bulkley was advertised to appear on the opening night, in the part of Clarinda in the *Suspicious Husband*, but it seems that two days previously she had sustained some injury by being overturned in a carriage upon the North Bridge. The farce of *Bon Ton* was likewise played on the opening night, when Mrs Duncan, a new member of the company, made her first appearance, playing Miss Tittup. The theatre had been newly painted, and the audience was large.

On Monday, January 10th, was given the *School for Scandal*, the part of Sir Peter Teazle by Mr Everard, from the Theatre Royal, Drury Lane, being his first appearance in Edinburgh. Joseph Surface = Woods; Crabtree = Kipling, being his second appearance on this stage; Charles Surface = Waylett, being his first appearance here; and Lady Teazle = Mrs Duncan, her second appearance here. To be followed by the *Rival Candidates*, the part of Narcissa = Mrs Baddeley.

* *Courant*.

She Stoops to Conquer was given on the 15th, with Everard as Tony Lumpkin, and Miss Hardcastle by Mrs Bulkley, who had now apparently recovered from the results of her accident, and made her first appearance this season. She intended to have spoken a rhyming address, which however, for some unknown reason, was printed in the newspapers instead.

During January Jackson advertised that "Mrs Yates has declined visiting Edinburgh this season, not from any disagreement in regard to terms, as Mr Jackson consented to every particular of her terms, but from her being unable to leave London." This, however, could not have been on account of theatrical engagements there, as she had none this season in London,* besides which she did appear here later on.

February 21st, *Othello*. Othello = Clinch, from the Theatre Royal, Dublin, "his first appearance in Great Britain;" Desdemona = Mrs Jackson. The *Courant* says, "Mr Clinch, with a figure happily suited to the part and a voice powerful and agreeably modulated, entered into the spirit of the much injured Moor in a manner that deeply interested the audience." The announcement that this was Clinch's "first appearance in Great Britain," quoted above, is in all probability inaccurate, if, as seems probable, he was the Laurence Clinch whose career is briefly sketched in the "Thespian Dictionary."

On March 24th, Mrs Yates commenced her engagement, appearing as the Duchess of Braganza in the *Tragedy of Braganza*, and on March 28th, Mr Yates made his appearance as Scrub; Aimwell = Woods; Archer = Ward; Mrs Sullen = Mrs Bulkley; with *Rosina*, in which Mrs Baddeley played the title rôle. March 31st, Mrs Yates played Jane Shore. April 7th, *Provok'd Husband*. Lord Townly = Clinch; Lady Townly = Mrs Yates. April 11th, *The Tragedy of Medea*, first time here. Jason = Clinch; Æson = Duncan; Lycander = Waylett; Creon = Woods; Hecate = Hallion; Medea = Mrs Yates, her original part. April 20th, *Douglas*, last night of Mrs Yates.

Mrs Bulkley's benefit was upon the 23rd, when the play was *Hamlet*. The part of Hamlet (for that night only) by Mrs Bulkley, being her first appearance in that character. Ophelia by Mrs Baddeley. "Tickets to be had of Mrs Bulkley, at Mr Stevenson's, painter, Shakespere Square."

* Genest, vol. vi. p. 349.

The following notice of this curious performance appeared in the *Courant* of April 25th :—

“ On Saturday night, the public were entertained with a singular exhibition at the Theatre by Mrs Bulkley, in the character of Hamlet. Although we cannot approve of the custom obtaining of females stepping out of the line of their character, yet we must own Mrs Bulkley’s appearance in Hamlet was wonderful. For some time it was, perhaps, difficult to forget the impropriety of a woman playing the part, yet, in the course of the play, the just and great applause of the audience gave complete evidence that this circumstance was forgotten, and her excellence in the character soon got the better of prejudice. It is much to be regretted that the house was so thin ; and we will venture to say that, if this part is again represented, there will be one of the fullest houses that has been seen since the days of Mrs Siddons. Mrs Bulkley displayed great knowledge of the character of Hamlet, which few players that attempt it understand. Through the various difficult parts she was always correct, and where requisite, animated and interesting. It would be too long to enter into the particulars of her excellent performance ; but, if consistent with the rules of the Theatre, we sincerely wish the manager may again allow this character to be played by Mrs Bulkley.”

In the *Courant* of the 27th is the following announcement :—

“ MRS BADDELEY’S BENEFIT.—Mrs Baddeley takes the liberty of offering her most grateful acknowledgments to the Public for their very indulgent acceptance of her endeavours, and hopes the same indulgence will induce them to pardon her not appearing on the night of her own benefit, as well as several late occasions, as she has been for some time confined to her chamber by severe illness.”

Her benefit was on the 30th April, when *The Suspicious Husband* was played. “ Tickets to be had of Mrs Baddeley, at Mrs Cumming’s, Dickson’s Close.”

An original burletta called *The Siege of Gibraltar*, “ the words by a gentleman and the music by Signor Urbani,” was produced in the St Cecilia Hall, Niddry’s Wynd, on Tuesday, April 26th. The announcement sets forth that “ an imitation of the Firing of Cannon from the Garrison is introduced, and the Spaniards returning the same ; with a new Overture, Songs, and Recitative. The whole to conclude with a grand chorus, with Kettle Drums and Trumpets. A book of the burletta will be given *gratis* at the door.”

On the 4th of May, Mrs Bulkley repeated her performance of Hamlet, with Ophelia on this occasion by Mrs Sparks, but there is no record as to the size of the audience.

Mrs Baddeley’s benefit had not resulted successfully, so she was allowed a second evening on May 18th, when the comedy of *The Chapter of Accidents* was played. This was the last piece performed during the winter season.

The Theatre opened for the summer season, and Mrs Siddons commenced her second engagement in Edinburgh, on July 12th, the *Grecian Daughter* being the play.

July 23rd, *The Carmelite*, by Cumberland (from Drury Lane, produced December 2nd 1784) for the first time here. St Valori, the Carmelite = Clinch; Lord Hildebrand = Wilmont Wells; Lord de Courci = Waylett; Gyfford = Sparks; Montgomeri = Woods; Matilda, her original part = Mrs Siddons.

July 27th, Miss Kemble appeared. "In figure and looks," says the *Courant*, "she is far from being so striking as her sister; she has, however, an agreeable countenance and a pleasing voice." Woods, who supported Mrs Siddons, got very high praise, and seems to have made a great hit as Jaffier. As on her former engagement, great excitement was manifested by the public during Mrs Siddons' visit. On several occasions, particularly when she played Isabella and Belvidera, ladies had to be carried out fainting, and some even took fits—of what nature is not recorded. Mrs Siddons' performances, with the amounts drawn for each, were as follows:—* July 12th, *Grecian Daughter*, £95; 14th, *Macbeth*, £125; 16th, *Fair Penitent*, £126; 18th, *Isabella*, £154; 20th, *Douglas*, £130; 23rd, *Carmelite*, £128; 25th, *Venice Preserved*, £130; 26th, *Carmelite*, £84; 27th, *Which is the Man*, £84; 28th, *Isabella*, £139; 29th, *Suspicious Husband*, (?) £15; 30th, *Jane Shore*, £115. August 1st, *Earl of Warwick*, £123; 2nd, *Mourning Bride*, £107; 3rd, *Provoked Husband* (benefit of Miss Kemble), £125; 6th, *Gamester* (benefit of Mrs Siddons), £200, exclusive of Gold Tickets; 8th, *Douglas* (Benefit of Charity Workhouse), £137; 9th, *Earl of Warwick*, £60, 16s. In all £2077, 16s. On the 12th, Mrs Siddons appeared in Glasgow as Belvidera.

When the next winter season 1785-6 opened (January 14th 1786), several changes had been made in the company. Mrs Baddeley was dead, Mrs Bulkley had left; there remained however Mrs Jackson, and Mrs W. Wells; while a valuable addition was made in Mrs Crawford, formerly Mrs Barry. This lady had played lead in Drury Lane for many years previous to the autumn of 1781, when she imprudently left that house and went to Dublin. The National Theatre, in the mean time, having secured the services of Mrs Siddons (from Bath), Mrs Crawford when she returned was not required, although she tried hard to regain her hold on the public.

* *Courant*.

Her powers, however, as an actress were undoubted, and she proved of great assistance to the Edinburgh company.

It is unfortunate that the date of Mrs Baddeley's death is not to be found. According to the "Memoirs of Mrs Sophia Baddeley" by Mrs Elizabeth Steele (London, 1787), she died in July 1786. It is much more likely, however, that her death occurred in the autumn of 1785, for no mention of her name is found after that time.* Her "Memoirs" say :—

"She played one season in Ireland, and was very much liked ; but as the profits of the house did not answer the expectations of the manager, she [with her Paramour John] left Ireland, and went to Edinburgh, where she played for about two years. Her pay there was barely sufficient to support them ; but, as she was much beloved by the performers, when her health declined (for she fell into consumption), and she was able to play no longer, they, greatly to their honour, subscribed a weekly sum, to afford her all the comforts a sick bed required, and a proper person to attend her. After lingering a few months she departed this life at Edinburgh, July 1786, aged 41 years."

January 19th, *Hamlet*. Hamlet = Iliff, being his first appearance here ; Ophelia = Mrs Iliff. Iliff was the son of a clergyman, and had passed on sea and land a somewhat romantic career. He married Miss Palmer, who was formerly of the Edinburgh company, out of gratitude for that lady having rescued him from pecuniary difficulties.† He had a prepossessing appearance and handsome figure, and evidently was well received here.‡ Mrs Iliff made a good Ophelia. The first appearance of Mrs Stephen Kemble had been advertised (to play Ophelia) for that evening (19th), but it was put off till the 23rd, when she appeared along with her husband ; their opening play being *Othello*. Kemble's *Othello* was favourably criticised, although the *Courant* found fault with his *turning to the audience* while addressing the senate.

On January 26th, *The Beaux' Stratagem*. Archer = Betterton, from the Theatre Royal, Dublin, being his first appearance in this kingdom.

January 30th, *Richard III*. Duke of Glo'ster by Mr Carey, "first appearance on this stage," and curiously the only mention of him to be found in connection with the Edinburgh stage. This was unquestionably George Saville Carey, dramatist, lecturer, and son of the famous Henry Carey, composer of the immortal ballad, "Sally in our Alley." On the same evening Kemble played King Henry ; Woods, Richmond ; and Mrs Woods, Lady Anne.

The first mention of Mrs Crawford's name occurs in the announcement

* The most careful search through the pages of the *Courant* newspaper has failed to throw any light on this point.

† Thespian Dictionary.

‡ *Courant*.

for February 1st, when *Douglas* was played. Iliff played Young Norval, a part for which his youthful appearance peculiarly fitted him, and Mrs Crawford assumed the rôle of Lady Randolph. The next mention of her name is on February 13th, when *Jane Shore* was performed; Mrs Kemble playing Jane Shore, and Mrs Crawford, Alicia.

The well known actor Wilson, from Covent Garden, and an old member of the Edinburgh company, appeared on February 23rd as Colonel Oldboy in *Lionel and Clarissa*.

March 2nd, *School for Scandal*.—Sir Peter = Wilson, first time; Lady Teazle = Mrs Kemble, first time.

March 8th, *King John*.—King John = S. Kemble; Prince Arthur = Mrs Iliff; the Dauphin = Iliff; Hubert = Bell; Salisbury = a young gentleman, being his first appearance on any stage; Faulconbridge = Clinch; Queen Elinor = Mrs Mountfort; Constance = Mrs Crawford. On the following evening Mr H. Nicholson Stewart played Hamlet.

On March 30th, Mrs Sparks made her first appearance here, acting Mrs Oakly in *The Jealous Wife*. On April 10th, Nicholson Stewart played Richard III. It was his last performance on any stage; he died on the 24th of the same month.

April 5th, *King Henry IV*.—Sir John Falstaff = Wilson; Hotspur = S. Kemble.

Wilson took his benefit on April 19th, when was performed “a new comedy never acted here, called *The Follies of a Day*, or *The Marriage of Figaro*, as acted in Paris 80 nights in one season, and at Covent Garden over 50 consecutive nights.” It is difficult to say how often Beaumarchais’ original play was acted in Paris, but Jackson perpetrated a deliberate falsehood by advertising that Holcroft’s adaptation had run “over 50 consecutive nights at Covent Garden.” It was played some twenty-nine times *in all* during its first season (1784-5) at that house.* In Edinburgh, Wilson doubled the parts of Don Guzman—originally played by Quick—and Antonio, the drunken gardener, while his own original part of Dr Bartholo was played by Kippling. The remainder of the cast was as follows:—Figaro = Lamash; Basil = O’Reilly; The Page = Mrs Iliff (with song, “Ah, well a day, my poor heart”); Count Almaviva = Woods; Countess = Mrs Sparks; Susan = Mrs Wilson, “from Theatre Royal, Haymarket,” her first appearance in Scotland.

* Genest, vol. vi. p. 357.

“For the benefit of Mrs KEMBLE. Mrs Kemble respectfully informs the ladies and gentlemen of Edinburgh that, after the play on Monday next (April 24th), she intends herself the honour of speaking an Epilogue, addressed to them, and written on this occasion. She laments being prevented by her situation from appearing in any character. The words of the Epilogue will be published, and delivered (*gratis*) at the doors of the theatre; and Mrs Kemble hopes that will be considered as an apology, if she should, when the time arrives, be unable to speak it.” She did not appear. The epilogue was as follows:—

“Untaught, unpractis’d in the ways of Art,
 Nothing to boast of but a grateful heart,
 Though oft by fiction aided, I have come,
 And warm’d by your indulgence, *felt at home*.
 Now I’d make known the feelings of that heart,
 My trembling lips refuse to speak their part.
 Expect no flow of language: I appeal
 To you, and all to pity what I feel.
 A woman pleads, a woman don’t refuse;
 But wherefore ask that boon of British youths?
 Though all confused before these awful ranks,
 I come to pay the tribute of my thanks;
 Thanks, gen’rous patrons, thanks from her receive,
 Who poor e’en here—has nothing else to give.
 But, if in future years there should appear,
 Some spark yet latent of true genius here;
 If—I say, if matured by time and toil,
 Something from me e’er chance to win your smile,
 Those future years of mine, those future pow’rs,
 If such should be, shall still, *shall still be yours*;
 And this night’s kindness to your servant shown,
 Through her whole life, with gratitude shall own.”

May 17th, Kemble’s benefit, “By desire of the Siddonian Club.” On the 20th the winter season came to a close.

It is worth while noting that during this season a great many letters on theatrical topics were addressed to the editor of the *Courant*. The writers of these set themselves out to criticise in a very free manner, but they were almost all poor creatures. The only exceptions were the writers of a series signed “Peter,” commencing January 16th, and of another signed “John Peppercorn.” Both of these were well informed, discriminating, and able to write tolerable English.

The summer season commenced on June 15th (advertised for 14th,

but put off). The play was *Othello*, in which Pope, from Covent Garden, played the title rôle, making his first bow to a Scottish audience ; and his newly-married wife, late Miss Younge, played Desdemona. After playing for five evenings, the theatre was closed till July 6th, when Pope and his bride acted for other three nights, and the same company remained.

July 17th, "Never acted here," *The Country Girl*. Moody = Woods ; Belville = Bland, junr. ; Harcourt = Bell ; Country Boy = Yates ; Sparkish (with a song) = Lamash ; Alithea = Mrs O'Reilly ; Lucy = Mrs J. Bland ; and Peggy, the Country Girl = Mrs Jordan, "being her first appearance in this kingdom." On the next night but one (19th), another important "first appearance" was that of Mrs Kennedy, the vocalist and actress, in the male part of Don Carlos in *The Duenna*.

July 22nd, *She Would and She Would Not*.—Hypolita = Mrs Jordan ; with *The Romp*—Princess Tomboy = Mrs Jordan. She also played Letitia Hardy, with an address by herself (July 31st) ; Viola, *Twelfth Night* (August 3rd), etc. Considerable excitement seems to have been caused by her visit, but no notices appeared in the *Courant* of her performances.

During the months of November and December 1786, and the earlier part of January 1787, a company of tumblers from Sadlers Wells performed at the Theatre, and on the 13th January the regular season commenced. During its first few months there was nothing of any importance. Fennell, about whom a good deal will be said later on, had joined the company, and on February 5th, a Mr and Mrs Robinson made their first appearance in Edinburgh. They are described in the advertisements as being from the Theatre Royal in Dublin, and the supposition is natural that the lady was no other than the famous Mrs Mary Robinson, who, according to Genest,* retired altogether from the stage in 1780.

On April 9th, 1787, for the benefit of Mr Wilson, "will be presented a musical Pasticchio, after which a comedy, never acted here, called, *I'll Tell You What*. Mr Euston = Wilson ; Mr Anthony Euston = Kemble ; Charles Euston = Woods ; Colonel Downright = Wilmot-Wells ; Sir George Euston = Iliff ; Sir Harry Harmless = Lamash ; Major Cyprus = Ward ; Lady H. Cyprus = Mrs Wroton ; Lady Euston = Mrs Sparks ; Bloom = Mrs Wilson ; and a Young Lady = Mrs Kemble. The prologue by Mr Iliff, and the epilogue by Mrs Kemble. After the play, a poetical address to the audience, called "The Judge's Charge to the Jury," to which will be added, never performed here, a comic opera in two acts, called *Patrick in*

* Vol. vi. p. 137.

Prussia, by John O'Keefe (from the author's original manuscript, by permission). Darby = Wilson ; Quiz = Moss ; Father Luke = Hallion ; Rupert = Bland, junr. ; Greenbergh = Charteris ; Adjutant = J. Bland ; Timiny Tickleback = Yates ; Flora = Mrs Wilson ; Mabel Flourish = Mrs Charteris ; Norah = Mrs Iliff ; after which "the scene will draw up and discover the stage fitted up exactly in the oratorio style, when a musical performance will commence called the 'Sons of Anacreon,' or 'The Harmonical Society.'" Seven glees were included in this performance, and "to make the band complete, there will be an organ on the stage." "Tickets of Mr Wilson, No. 12 St James Square, New Town."

The above programme was evidently thought good money's worth, for the house was crowded. At what hour the performances concluded is not recorded.

On April 16th, Woods took his benefit, on which occasion he recited a prologue specially written for him by Robert Burns.

PROLOGUE.

"When, by a gen'rous public's kind acclaim,
That dearest meed is granted—honest fame ;
When *here* your favour is the *actor's* lot,
Nor ev'n the *man* in *private life* forgot ;
What breast so dead to heav'nly virtue's glow,
But heaves impassion'd with the grateful throe !
Poor is the task to please a barb'rous throng,
It needs no Siddons' pow'rs in Southern's song ;
But here an ancient nation, fam'd afar
For genius, learning high, as great in war—
Hail Caledonia ! name for ever dear !
Before whose sons I'm honoured to appear !
Where every science, every nobler art,
That can inform the mind, or mend the heart,
Is known ; as grateful nations oft have found,
Far as the rude barbarian marks the bound ;
Philosophy, no idle pedant dream,
Here holds her search by heav'n-taught Reason's beam ;
Here Hist'ry paints, with elegance and force,
The tide of empire's fluctuating course.
Here Douglas forms wild Shakespeare into plan,
And Harley * rouses all the God in man.
When well form'd taste and sparkling wit unite,
With manly love, or female beauty bright,

* "The Man of Feeling," by Mackenzie.

(Beauty, where faultless symmetry and grace
 Can only charm us in the second place)—
 Witness my heart, how oft with panting fear,
 As on this night, I've met these judges here !
 But still the hope experience taught to live,
 Equal to judge, you're candid to forgive.
 No hundred-headed Riot here we meet,
 With Decency and Law beneath his feet ;
 Nor Insolence assumes fair Freedom's name,
 Like *Caledonians* you applaud or blame.
 O thou dread Power ! whose empire-giving hand
 Has oft been stretch'd to shield this honour'd land !
 Strong may she glow with all her ancient fire ;
 May ev'ry son be worthy of his sire ;
 Firm may she rise with generous disdain
 At Tyranny's—or direr Pleasure's chain ;
 Still self-dependent, in her native shore
 Bold may she brave grim Danger's loudest roar,
 Till Fate the curtain drop on worlds to be no more !”

As is well known, this is not the only contribution of a similar kind that Burns made to stage literature ; but when we consider the keen dramatic instinct he showed in his “ Jolly Beggars,” it must ever be a matter for regret that so great a genius is unrepresented on the stage, and such a glorious chance of founding a Scottish drama was lost to us for ever.

On May 2nd, for Kemble's benefit, O'Keefe's *Young Quaker*, for the first time here. Captain Ambush = Iliff ; Shadrach = Yates ; Clod = Wilson ; Chronicle = Moss ; Dinah Primrose (with an epilogue in character) = Mrs Kemble ; after which a “ theatrical medley,” “ The Maid that tends the Goats,” a new song by a gentleman of this city, to be sung by Mrs Kemble—a hint at the secret, by Mrs Kemble, as a Freemason's wife ; to be followed by *The Frolic*, after which a farce called *The Fool*, and the whole to conclude with *Away to Leith Links, or a Golfing we will go*.

“ Mr Kemble assures the public, notwithstanding the variety in his bill of fare, that the whole performance will be over by half-past eleven.”

From May 10th to 19th the Theatre was closed. On the latter date, however, it opened, with Lee Lewes as an especial attraction. After acting in several pieces, Lee Lewes gave his “ Lecture on Heads.” Mrs Jordan opened an engagement on June 7th, which extended until the

middle of July. About the same time the Theatre closed, and the company went to Dundee, where they remained until the end of October.

The Theatre was open from the 4th to the 22nd of December 1787, but closed then until January 19th 1788, when it re-opened with *The Way to Keep Him*, and *Peeping Tom*.

January 30th, Mrs Strickland made her first appearance as Lady Bell Bloomer in *Which is the man?*

February 3rd, *Othello*. Othello = Fennell, "who performed the character here last summer, and in London this season, by the name of Cambray."

Jackson says,* "Towards the close of the season 1787 Mr Fennell, without any introduction or recommendation but his own appearance and report, became known to me. The audience approved of him; and from their approbation I entered into an engagement with him for the next season, under the penalty of £200." In the autumn, however, he had gone to London to purchase dresses, and Harris, who brought him forward, as noted above, offered to engage him and pay Jackson the £200 penalty, as well as any larger sum he might think reasonable for damages. Jackson declined this offer, and Fennell had more honour than to break his engagement. Jackson further says, "Mr Fennell continued the winter with me in Edinburgh; and I must do him the justice to say, that he attended to his business in every instance with the nicest punctuality. He was never absent at *one* rehearsal, and cheerfully undertook, at the shortest notice, every part assigned to him." The extraordinary outcome of Fennell's engagement will be noted in its proper place a few lines below.

February 6th, Fennell acted Macbeth, and appears to have been received with great applause;† during the entire season, indeed, he acted nearly all the leading parts, Woods playing second lead.

March 24th, Miss George, from Drury Lane, made her first appearance as Rosetta in *Love in a Village*.

April 19th, Mr Bulkley's benefit, *Much Ado About Nothing*, with alterations from the MS. of David Garrick. Benedick = Williamson; Beatrice = Mrs Bulkley.

On April 18th an announcement appeared that Jackson was building a Colonnade in front of the Theatre, and was going to place three statues on the top of the building, namely, Shakspeare in the middle, and Comedy

* History of Scottish Stage, p. 149.

† *Courant*.

and Tragedy on either side. He also proposed to make a green-room and extra dressing-rooms, inviting public subscriptions to aid him in his laudable enterprises. The alterations were allowed at a meeting of the proprietors, when Messrs Fullarton, Stuart of Allanbank, Andrew Balfour, Ramsay, Williamson, and Watson were present.

The season closed on June 2nd with *School for Scandal* and the pantomime of *Mother Shipton*.

On July 5th 1788 the Theatre again opened. *Douglas*. Lady Randolph = Mrs Siddons ; Douglas = Fennell.

July 14th, *Julia*, or the *Italian Lover*, by Robert Jephson. First time here. Mentevole = Fennell ; Julia = Mrs Siddons.

Mrs Siddons had been expected a month earlier, and although Fennell was under no obligation to stay over the summer in Edinburgh, he had done so to oblige Jackson, who asked him in order that Mrs Siddons might have proper support.

Fennell's remaining led to one of the most extraordinary cases of persecution that ever disgraced a theatrical audience. After it was over, Fennell, who was the sufferer, published a "Statement of Facts," which gives a plain, correct, and unvarnished account of the whole affair. He says,—

"On the evening of the 8th of July, the day preceding the performance of *Venice Preserved*, Mr Jackson put into my hands the following letter, which he had received that morning by the Penny Post, evidently written in a disguised hand:—'Sir,—If the parts of Jaffier and Pierre are not differently cast before to-morrow, the play will not be allowed to go on. It is unpardonable in a manager to thrust a fellow into a part which, he must be sensible, he is totally incapable of performing.—THE PUBLIC.' . . . On the following evening I came forward in the performance of my duty, and was proceeding in it, when I heard several hisses, and the cry of 'Off, Off!' from some part of the Pit. A reception so unusual and distressing, while it redoubled the applause from every other part of the house, naturally led me to consider what could be the cause of it. Instantly the anonymous letter flashed on my remembrance ; nor was I long before I concluded that the hissing must have proceeded from the authors of it. Recovering, therefore, from my embarrassment, during which the kind indulgence of almost the whole audience had supported me, I advanced, to discover, if possible, amongst whom the disapprobation prevailed. Several gentlemen having called out 'Hear him ! Hear him !' a silence gradually ensued ; upon which I thus addressed the audience :—'It would be but affectation in me to pretend ignorance of the cause of this partial disapprobation ; but I should'—here I was interrupted by several hisses from the Pit ; which, being immediately drowned by the louder and almost universal marks of applause, I changed my intended address to the audience in general and, referring only to the author of the letter, (and his abettors, who I was naturally led to imagine were my persecutors, endeavouring to put their threats in execution), I said,—'I cannot wonder that some persons are averse to my addressing the audience, when they must be conscious that, from my speaking, a scene of villainy will be revealed, in which, I fear, they may find themselves but too

deeply interested.' Here an apparently universal approbation followed; after which I resumed my former address to the audience in general,—‘but I should deem myself worthy of general censure, were I not at all times, and even at this present moment, equal to meet and to confute any accusation that can be adduced against me, either regarding my conduct as an actor or as a man!’ Here several gentlemen exclaimed, ‘I’m sure of it!’ ‘I’ll answer for you!’ Silence being restored, I stated that six weeks ago Mr Bland, senior, offered Mr Woods the part of Jaffier, Mr Bland being authorised by me to say that, with the permission of the manager, if more agreeable to Mr Woods, I would undertake the part of Pierre. The reply delivered to me by Mr Bland was, ‘Mr Fennell never would have offered me the part of Jaffier had he not thought he could have made a better part of Pierre.’ Here Mr Woods appeared upon the stage and said, ‘I should not thus, uncalled for, have obtruded myself upon the audience, had it not been to set that gentleman right in one particular; and I can assure the Public, upon *my* honour, that the part of Jaffier was never offered to me officially, but mentioned casually by Mr Bland in the course of common conversation!’

“The Manager was called for and appeared.

“*Manager*.—‘I must confess I cast the parts originally according to the best of my judgment; but this day se’nnight, I offered, *officially*, the part of Jaffier to Mr Woods!’

“*Woods*.—‘You did so, sir!’

“*Manager*.—‘Telling him, at the same time, that Mr Fennell had always declared a preference in favour of Pierre; to which Mr Woods replied that he would rather perform Pierre!’

“*Woods*.—‘Mr Jackson certainly offered me the part of Jaffier; but, as I then had studied Pierre, I did not think a week sufficient time to recover it!’

“*Manager*.—‘What Mr Fennell alluded to by a scene of villany, I imagine to be this letter’—

“Upon which I advanced, and having asked and obtained permission of the audience, was preparing to read it when a person from the Pit called out, ‘Then read the words.’ This cruel attack on my veracity was felt too sensibly for concealment. I advanced to that part of the Pit from whence the voice issued, and demanded, ‘Who dares imagine I would not?’ The approbation of almost the whole audience was testified, on this reply, by the most loud and lengthened applause; during which somebody near me said something about *duty* to the Public; to which I answered, ‘I know, and will always practise my duty to the Public, but will not suffer myself to be insulted by any individual,’ after which I read the letter, and then said . . . Here the applause was such as convinced me that I was attempting the part of Jaffier with the approbation of the *Public*, however discontented some few individuals might appear.”

On the following days Fennell and Jackson both received numerous anonymous letters, and on the 12th, Fennell was called for before the play began, when he advanced and said :—

“‘With the greatest respect for this audience, I now advance, to be informed why I am called before you.’ Some person exclaimed ‘For an apology,’ together with the loudest applause. However, as the hissing still continued, I replied, ‘An apology for what?’ . . . A person near me called out, ‘Account for the scene of villainy!’ to which I replied, ‘Is it the author of it that calls upon me?’ The tumult having subsided, I advanced, and said,

‘Have I any accuser?’ NO ONE APPEARED. Observing which, after a short pause, I added, ‘As it seems to be the prevailing opinion of this audience that I have committed no offence, I cannot think of making any apology.’

“On the Monday following, when I had hoped every disquiet had been concluded, I was surprised that a more formidable party had assembled, consisting chiefly of the younger branches of the law. Ill-founded reports had been circulated; my conduct had been misrepresented; and combinations had been formed, determined to carry by force what they had before failed in by justice.

“Upon my coming forward to speak the prologue to the *Italian Lovers*, I was received by the hisses and cat calls of their stationed parties in the Pit; while I was supported, if not by an equal number there, by almost every individual in the boxes and other parts of the house. In this cruel situation I remained for more than half-an-hour, . . . when the dispute becoming more violent, several blows were received on either side. Upon which many gentlemen leaped from the Boxes into the Pit, which was quickly restored to some degree of tranquility. . . . I was then called upon to repeat what I had said on Saturday, which I did. After which, Sir John Dalrymple stood forward, and thus addressed me:— ‘Mr Fennell, I am your friend, and sit among those that are your friends; the expression “villainy,” which you made use of on Wednesday last, was a rash one, but excusable in one whose mind was hurt, and who was conscious of being a gentleman. However, I give you my advice, to make some slight concessions to that part of the audience who have taken offence, who will overlook what is past, and the play will be suffered to go on.’ A gentleman begged that I would answer one question,—‘Mr Fennell, when you made use of the term “a scene of villainy,” it was addressed to the author of the anonymous letter, and his abettors, and to them only, and not to the audience in general, was it not?’ To which I replied undoubtedly, upon which many of the opposite party exclaimed, ‘Enough, Mr Fennell; Huzza, Mr Fennell;’ and a general applause ensued.”

So much for Fennell's statement, the main facts stated in which are fully borne out by Jackson, as well as by contemporary evidence. The little pamphlet is dated from Walker's Hotel, July 24th 1788. The information to follow is furnished by a summons taken out by Fennell against one of his detractors for wanton, illegal, and unwarrantable combination and conspiracy, “whereby the pursuer was driven from his employment in the Theatre;” the damages demanded being £15,000.

On July 15th Jackson received the following letter:—

“SIR,—We are of opinion that Mr Fennell's late deportment to the public, and your conduct as manager with regard to that matter, require a very ample apology from both, testifying your deep regret for having failed in the respect due to them; and if Mr Fennell fails to make such an apology, you ought immediately to dismiss him. And we take this method of intimating to you that, if this opinion is not complied with, either by making the apology suggested on Wednesday evening, or dismissing Mr Fennell, that neither we nor our families will henceforth frequent your theatre, or shew you any countenance as manager, except that, from our high regard for Mrs Siddons, we shall postpone executing our resolution till her engagement expires.”

This letter was signed by Robert Dundas, solicitor-general, and one hundred and sixty-four gentlemen of the legal profession!

Upon receipt of this letter Fennell, of course, withdrew, published his "Statement of Facts," and then commenced the action mentioned above. Summonses were sent to, John Wilde, advocate; John Clerk, advocate; James Gibson, W.S.; James Campbell, W.S.; Thomas Cunningham, advocate; William Dallas, W.S.; David Cathcart, advocate; William Anderson, W.S.; John Hagart, advocate; James Young, W.S.; William Inglis, writer; George Robertson and Alex. Cunningham, writers.

Genest * rightly terms the persecution of Fennell "a vile conspiracy." He continues, "Fennell, not considering himself degraded from his original situation in Society, had frequented the balls and danced as usual—a friend, who was at Edinburgh at the time, told me that this gave offence to several gentlemen—but if this were the real cause of their enmity to him, they ought to have made the M.C. represent to him the supposed impropriety of his behaviour; and not have attacked him at the theatre."

On July 25th, Signora Peres, chief dancer to the Duchess of Parma, appeared.

July 28th, benefit of Mrs Siddons. *As You Like It*. Rosalind = Mrs Siddons, first time here.

Upon the conclusion of her engagement Mrs Siddons was presented, by the gentlemen of Parliament House, with a piece of plate weighing 144 ounces, made by Mr Robertson of Parliament Close. It bore the following inscription:—"To MRS SIDDONS, as an acknowledgement of Respect for eminent Virtues, and of gratitude for pleasure received from unrivalled talents. Edinburgh, 1788."

August 1st was her last night, after which she went to Glasgow along with the company.

Mr Woods seems to have remained, as he advertises that "he gives lessons in reading English."


During August the following advertisement appeared:—"Jones and Parker invite subscriptions to build the Amphitheatre in Leith Walk, where they have had a temporary building."

The appeal was made successfully, and an amphitheatre or circus was built, which in its time saw many strange scenes.

* History of English Stage, vol. vi. p. 506.

CHAPTER XIII.

THE NEW PATENT.

N the 29th of September 1788, the royal patent for the Theatre expired, and it is interesting at this stage to look back upon the series of events which led to the original application for the patent, and the effect it produced during the term of its existence. Previous to 1767 the Theatre was unlicensed, and plays were acted under cover of an exceedingly thin evasion of the law, namely that of announcing concerts with the play given gratis between the parts. This was far from satisfactory ; and the anomaly of a company of proprietors composed of the dignitaries of the law evading the laws they were paid by government to uphold and enforce, was so absurdly apparent as to necessitate a complete change. The “gentlemen” proprietors, now as anxious to get rid of the whole concern as ever they had been to become mixed up in it, in their hurry to cleanse themselves of the “pitch” that they thought was soiling their fingers, made over the patent right away to the highest bidder. This action of theirs benefited but one person besides themselves, namely Ross, the new patentee. That it did benefit him requires little pointing out. In the first place, for a few hundred pounds he acquired an absolute monopoly of keeping open a theatre in Edinburgh for the next twenty-one years. This, in an active capacity however, he was unable to do ; so he let the patent out at so much a year, along with a building which he had raised out of the pockets of others, by the magic of his financial aptitude. Even when his monopoly had but three years to run, he was able to get an annuity settled on him for life through the potent influence of the patent.

On the public's side, it is very questionable if the patent was beneficial. Looking at the uneventful records of much of its term, the unquestionably

bad companies of many seasons, and the wretched patronage often given, it is reasonable to suppose that had there been free trade a higher standard of excellence might have been attained. When the first patent was about to expire, Jackson applied for a new one in his own name, and in that application set himself forth as *sole* proprietor. The twenty-five gentlemen shareholders took a different view of the case, and declared they were proprietors along with Mr Jackson ; and, evidently forgetting the lesson the "gentlemen" proprietors of the Canongate House had received twenty-one years previously, applied in *their own* names for the patent. Jackson at once became alarmed ; for had they carried their point they would in all probability have transferred the patent to a new playhouse. In that case Jackson would have found himself as it were stranded high and dry, with a theatre belonging chiefly to him, but unable to turn it to account. The position the shareholders assumed was that of "trustees" for the public, and although it is obvious that they did so only with the object of gaining public support, yet, on the other hand, it was clearly undesirable that a man of Jackson's calibre should hold a monopoly for so long a term as twenty-one years. It was proposed to give the patent for a shorter term, but this Jackson wisely refused with indignation. Eventually, however, matters were settled by the intervention of several gentlemen, who prevailed upon the Duke of Hamilton and Henry Dundas, Esq., to become joint patentees as trustees for the public. It may be mentioned that Jackson denies the latter qualification, and says they were trustees for the proprietors, a statement which is not borne out by fact. Jackson further alleges that he, as proprietor, asked the Duke and Mr Dundas to become his trustees of the patent, and that they consented in writing.

Accordingly, the new patent was procured as above, and it was allowed in the mean time to lend its royal sanction for the playing of stage plays in favour of Jackson's building.

The first season under the new patent does not seem to have opened till January 21st, 1789, when Holman from Covent Garden appeared as Hamlet, the Ghost by Williamson. Holman must have been a valuable addition to the company ; he appears to have been engaged in Fennell's place.

A Mrs Belsill was advertised to appear, but shortly after there appeared a paragraph stating that she had died in Glasgow of a "putrid fever." This must have been Mrs Belfille, who appears to have acted only once

in London.* King made his first appearance in Edinburgh on March 28th, in his great part of Lord Ogleby in the *Clandestine Marriage*. During his stay he played Touchstone, Copper Captain, Puff, Sir Peter Teazle, Young Philpot, &c.

On April 29th, "God Save the King" was sung in honour of the king's recovery.

At Woods' benefit, on May 4th, the tragedy of *Vimonda*, which had been brought out at the Haymarket, September 1787, was played for the first time here. It was by Macdonald, son of a Leith gardener, who had been educated for the ministry, and after being admitted into holy orders had resigned. He died in great poverty in London in 1788.†

The season closed on May 16th.

Throughout this winter (1788-9) the private theatricals at Marionville—well-known through Chambers' graphic description of the tragic cause of their stoppage,‡—were in full swing. The *Scots Magazine* says:—"On Friday, March 27th, the Tragedy of *Douglas* was performed at Mr Macrae's private theatre at Marionville. This theatre, though small, is extremely neat. The scenes are prettily painted. In the front of the stage is a piece of drapery, on the top of which is a scroll with the words, *The abstract and brief chronicle of the times*; and in the centre of the scroll is a bust of Shakspeare. The seats below and gallery above, it is supposed, will contain about 150 persons. The *dramatis personæ* were, Douglas = Mr Lemaistre; Glenalvon = Captain M'Ewan; Lord Randolph = Captain Hunter; Old Norval = Mr Macrae; Anna = Mrs Carruthers; Lady Randolph = Mrs Macrae. A prologue suited to the occasion, written by Mr Lemaistre, was spoken by that gentleman. After the play Mrs Macrae delivered an excellent epilogue written by herself. It contained much point, and was delivered with such *vis comica*, as showed that Mrs Macrae's powers are not confined to tragedy."

Another piece played during the season at Marionville was *Venice Preserved*. Belvidera = Mrs Macrae; Jaffier = Mr Macrae; Priuli = Captain Hunter; Renault = Captain Wellwood; Pierre = Captain M'Ewan.

The summer season (1789) at the Theatre Royal opened on July 14th with Mrs Jordan as Peggy in the *Country Girl*.

* Genest, vol. vi. p. 439.

‡ Traditions of Edinburgh.

† The Dramatic Writers of Scotland, by R. Inglis.

On the 24th Fennell seems to have played Othello and addressed the audience, and on August 4th he took a benefit. The Theatre was then closed till October 13th, when it re-opened for the Race week, and Mrs Taylor from the Haymarket and Miss Fontenelle from Covent Garden appeared. The Theatre was again closed early in November.

The winter season (1789-90) opened on December 26th with *The Confederacy*. Jackson, apprehensive that the new Circus which had been built in Leith Walk would hurt his business, had engaged a very strong company. King, Pope, Wilson, Woods, Moss, Williamson, Mrs Esten, Mrs Barresford, Mrs Jackson, and Miss Fontenelle, were the leading members, and it would have been difficult to have had a better selected company out of London. Yet the season did not pay. Of course the Circus must have been largely to blame for this, but one can scarcely believe it to have been the sole cause.

December 31st, Tragedy of *Mary Queen of Scots*, by Hon. John St John. Duke of Norfolk = Woods; Sir William Cecil = Archer; Queen Elizabeth = Mrs W. Wells; Mary Queen of Scots = Mrs Barresford.

Mrs Esten made her first appearance, as Juliet, on January 19th, Pope playing Romeo; Williamson, Friar Lawrence; Moss, Peter; Woods, Mercutio.

Mrs Esten proved a great success, and speedily grew into great favour with the Edinburgh audience.

March 13th, *Much Ado About Nothing*. Benedick = King; Claudio = Woods; Don John = Hallion; Dogberry = Moss; Beatrice = Mrs Esten; Hero = Mrs Woods.

From March 19th to 28th, the company played in Glasgow, but on the 29th they re-opened in Edinburgh with *The Way to Keep Him*. Sir Bashful = King; Sir Brilliant = Lamash; Lovemore = Woods; Mrs Lovemore = Mrs Barresford; Widow Bellmour = Mrs Esten, in which character she will introduce a song, and accompany herself on the *Forte-Piano*. This is the first mention of a pianoforte being played in the Edinburgh Theatre, though it is not improbable that it was not the first time that it had been so used, since it was so far back as May 16th 1767 that Charles Dibdin had played "a new instrument called Pianoforte" at Covent Garden for the first time in public in England. The winter season terminated on May 19th, and the Theatre re-opened for the summer on May 26th—by desire of the Dean and Faculty of Advocates,—*The English Merchant* being played. June 1st, *The Dramatist*, never acted

here. Vapid = Wilson ; Neville = Williamson ; Floriville = Lamash ; Lord Scratch = Bell ; Marianne = Mrs W. Wells ; Willoughby = Woodroffe ; Louisa = Mrs Barresford.

June 3rd, *The Dramatist*, 3rd time ; at the end of the play the much admired song of " Poor Jack " (Dibdin) by Mr Woodroffe.

The house was closed for a week, and then re-opened on June 26th with King, who had been up in London, and Miss Farren. *Much Ado* was played, Benedick = King ; Dogberry = Wilson ; Beatrice = Miss Farren, her first appearance here. The season closed on July 28th.

The *Scots Magazine* for September 1790 contains the following :—

" On the 14th September, at London, [died] suddenly, Mr David Ross, the tragedian, Master of the Revels for Scotland, and original patentee of the Theatre at Edinburgh, and the last of the old set of players so much admired. The father of Mr Ross was formerly a W.S. at Edinburgh, but settled in London in 1722 as a Solicitor of Appeals, in which profession he lived with considerable credit.

" David was born in the year 1728 ; but at the early age of thirteen he unfortunately lost his father's affections by some indiscretions at Westminster School, which he was so unhappy as never to regain ; and though in his letters the old gentleman attributes the cause of his anger to his son's heedlessness and inattention, yet so far did he carry his resentment, as to be capable of sporting with his son's misfortunes in the hour of quitting the world, as will appear from the following injunction in his will :—' And also that the said Elizabeth Ross* shall be obliged to pay or cause to be paid to her said brother, David Ross, the sum of one shilling upon the first day of every month of May, that being his birthday, thereby to put him in mind of his misfortune he had to be born.' The late Mr Ross came upon the Covent Garden stage about the year 1753,† and, having the advantage of a good person and a good education, raised him at least to the second rank in tragedy and genteel comedy. Pretty much about this period it was that Lord Sp—— threw his eyes on him as a proper person to accomplish an act of benevolence and humanity, that will ever reflect the highest credit on his Lordship's heart. The celebrated Fanny Murray had been debauched by his father ; to atone for such a fault, he considered an act of justice ; he therefore proposed her as a wife to Mr Ross, with a settlement of £200 a-year. Ross's dissipations demanded such an addition to his fortune, and as the lady retained nothing of her former situation but her charms, the contract was signed and the marriage celebrated.

" Mr Ross afterwards purchased the Edinburgh Patent, at which place he was obliged to reside in the course of his profession ; and here it was suggested to him that, by the laws of Scotland, a person could not will his estate by mere words of exclusion without an express conveyance of inheritance at the same time ; which last circumstance had been omitted by his father ; accordingly he brought his action of reduction against his sister, which, after being argued before Lord Kennet, Ordinary, December 1769, he gave the interlocutor in his favour. His sister and her husband then applied for representation, in which they were a second time worsted ; they ultimately brought it before the House of Lords, where the legality and

* Married Hugh Ross of Shandwick and Kerse.

† This is quite wrong. See below.



*MR. ROSS in the Character of ESSEX.
Essex: Am I not your General?
and was I not so by Virtue of this Staff?*

justice of Mr Ross's title was so ably pleaded by the Lord Advocate and the Solicitor-General, that their Lordships gave a decree in his favour, by which he recovered near £6,000.

"He now disposed of the Edinburgh Theatre to Mr Foote, and renewed his engagements at Covent Garden. He uninterruptedly enjoyed this situation until about twelve years ago, when, being left out of the managerial arrangements, he never recovered it. For some time after this period he was consigned to severe distress. Improvident, like the generality of his brethren, he had made no provision for the future; and, in this situation, a small annuity from a mortgage on the Edinburgh Theatre served rather to tantalise than to relieve his wants. He was one day surprised by an enclosure of a £60 note; the envelope containing only a mention that it came from an old schoolfellow, and a direction to a banker where he was to receive the same sum annually. This, which he afterwards found his most certain provision, was continued for many years, and the donor was still unknown. The mystery was at length discovered, through an inadvertence of the banker's clerk, and Ross, with infinite gratitude, found his benefactor in the person of Admiral Barrington. The accident of breaking his leg, about two years ago, decided his theatrical fate, and he lived principally upon the bounty of his great naval friend.

"As an actor Ross had claims to great praise in tragic characters of the mixed passions, as well as lovers in genteel comedy; but from indolence, or the love of pleasure, he was not always equal to himself.

"Churchill said of him,

'Ross (a misfortune which we often meet)
Was fast asleep at dear Statira's feet.'

"As a companion he may be considered as the last *élève* of Quin, from whom he seemed to glean his relish for the table."

The account given above is interesting, but far from correct as to dates. Ross's first appearance seems to have been in Dublin, May 8th 1749, as Clerimont in the *Miser*. He was in Drury Lane from 1751-2 to 1756-7, after which he went to Covent Garden, and remained there till the spring of 1767, when he came to Edinburgh. His connection with the Edinburgh Theatre has already been traced. He returned to Covent Garden in 1770-1 as stated in the above narrative, but only to continue for *two* seasons, not twelve. He acted again at Covent Garden in 1777-8. The remainder of the above sketch of his life may very possibly be correct.

Jackson's next season (1790-1) opened on December 4th, with *Henry IV*. Sir John Falstaff = Ryder, from Covent Garden, first appearance for seven years. December 9th, *Padlock*. Leonora = Miss R. Ryder, from Covent Garden, first appearance here and fourth on any stage. The Theatre was closed from December 24th to January 20th, when it reopened with *As You Like It*. Touchstone = Ryder; Adam = Williamson; Orlando = by a Gentleman (Mr Toms); Jacques = Woods; Rosalind = Kennedy, from Covent Garden.

Mr Fraser, vocalist, made his first appearance on January 29th, and

on February 7th there was produced for the first time here the *German Hotel*, from Covent Garden. Dorville = Woods; Count Kolberg = Williamson; Baron Thork = Guion; William = Lamash; Count Werling = Kennedy; Adelaide = Mrs Barresford; Mrs Dorville = Mrs Kennedy.

February 23rd, Grand Serious Pantomime, *Death of Captain Cook*. Captain Cook = Williamson. The scenery seems to have been unusually good. A similar entertainment, on the same subject, was brought out at the Circus.

March 12th, *Merry Wives of Windsor*, by desire of the Earl of Morton, Grand Master Mason. On March 19th, Mrs Esten appeared for the first time this season, her last appearance being on April 4th, when she played *Douglas* (first time in the part). The last night of the season, May 19th, was set apart as a benefit for the Edinburgh Dispensary.

The summer season opened on June 20th with the *Grecian Daughter*. July 9th, *Conscious Lovers*. Young Bevil = Bew, first appearance here; his second appearance was as Flutter in the *Belle's Stratagem*, on July 18th. July 29th, last night, *Richard III*. Title rôle by a young gentleman.

And here ends the first period of Jackson's reign as manager in Edinburgh.

When Jackson took out sequestration is doubtful. A careful perusal of his work * (sections x. and xi.) leads to the belief that it must have been in July 1790; but, if so, how did he carry on the concern through another season? Again he says (p. 198), "In the spring of 1791 the clouds of warfare began to collect. They went off in evaporation, with respect to political matters, but some of the grosser particles fell upon me." He refers to the non-arrival of the Fleet, which had been expected, and would have brought much money into the treasury. But (p. 192) he speaks of the "short period of my retirement from July 21st to August 21st," which must have been in 1790, for he says the company was managed by King during that time. King was in Scotland in 1790, but not in 1791. That is, assuming "retirement" to signify a sojourn in the neighbourhood of Holyrood House. One thing, however, is clear, he did take out sequestration, and his estate was put into the hands of trustees—if not sooner—certainly during the summer of 1791. He hoped to pull through with the assistance of Mrs Billington, whom he endeavoured to engage (for the summer of 1791); but that lady disappointed his hopes, and Jackson

* History of Scottish Stage.

had to succumb to the inevitable. The paragraphs quoted below * seem to point to the conclusion of 1790 being the date of Jackson's sequestration, in which case he had only been managing the concern during the season 1790-1 for his own trust estate.

"But the person who at that time possessed the power of controlling my fortune would not allow me *another trial*. The Theatre was advertised to be let to the highest bidder ; and a clause was inserted in the articles of roup, that previous security should be lodged by the parties proposing to bid ; a clause professedly intended to prevent any offer from me.

"In this situation, it was judged advisable for me to seek for some additional strength. Two competitors started for the lease : Mrs Esten and Mr Stephen Kemble. My wish was to have been connected with the former ; but Mrs Bennett, † not coming down, and some mistake happening with those who conducted the business on her part, I was thereby thrown into a treaty with Mr Kemble."

That treaty led to very important results. If Jackson is to be believed, Kemble behaved shamefully. Lee Lewes, who gives a very lengthy account of the whole transaction, says, on the other hand, that Jackson was entirely to blame for all the misunderstanding that took place.

Lee Lewes gives his account as follows :—‡

"At the period when his creditors advertised the Theatres of Edinburgh and Glasgow to be let by public auction, Mr Stephen Kemble and Mrs Esten were the two candidates (November 2nd 1791). Jackson supplicates Kemble to take the Theatre for one year, to prevent Mrs Esten becoming the lessee, whose influence he dreaded, fearing, if she once got the theatres into her possession, they would never revert to him again ; but it is natural to ask, whence those fears should arise, after telling his creditors that the scheme had ruined him, or why then make choice of Mr Kemble instead of Mrs Esten ? But *most truly* thus it was—he tells Kemble to take it at any rent, and says, 'I shall have it in my power, I hope, to settle with my creditors before the next year, so as to prevent the two theatres ever being let by auction again ; and as long as I may have any concern in them, you shall be my partner, as I prefer you and your connections to Mrs Esten ; and further, I will find you security for one half of the rent and become your partner in the concern.' Kemble had no objections, missives were made out and signed, and Kemble took the Theatre at £1350. The dispute now arose. Jackson produced his security, which Kemble objected to as not being sufficient. Jackson insisted on him taking it, so the difficulty was laid before the Dean of the Faculty of Advocates as arbitrator. That distinguished individual, however, did not give his decret-final until within a few days of the close of the season (1791-2), during which time Jackson, who had constantly troubled the Dean of Faculty with letters and interviews, found out he could not get rid of Kemble by fair means, so made a secret bargain for the ensuing season with Mrs Esten, to let her the Theatre at £200 less rent !"

* History of Scottish Stage, p. 200.

† Mrs Esten's mother.

‡ Memoirs, vol. iii. p. 85.

Lee Lewes and Jackson's accounts are substantially the same ; but differ in regard to motive. That Jackson was a martyr is scarcely to be credited, and there is every reason to suppose that Kemble was not above taking an advantage if he could get it.

It will be well now to glance at Jackson's money affairs, the state of which led to the Theatre being let. On page 178 of his "History of the Scottish Stage," he enters upon a long explanation of the reasons why the Theatre did not pay under his management. The chief item was his scheme of working the Glasgow, Dundee, and Aberdeen Theatres in conjunction with that of Edinburgh. It might have paid very well in time ; but without capital, was ruinous. The Glasgow house he had built himself, chiefly out of his Edinburgh profits ; and the Aberdeen Theatre he seems to have gone about in the same manner. "This necessary and laudable endeavour," says Jackson,* "led me into great and numerous expenses ; which, however, were not run into hastily, but upon very mature deliberation, and under the strongest assurance of a pecuniary support to no inconsiderable amount. In *that I was disappointed*; and from that disappointment the deficiency in my finances arose."

He then gives the following tables of income and expenditure :—

The sum total of the nightly receipts of the year 1789 was	£5180	5	0
The current expenses,	-	-	4454 1 5
Profit,	-	-	<u>£726 3 7</u>
Nightly receipts of 1790,	-	-	£5275 8 6
Expenses,	-	-	<u>5297 1 11</u>
Loss,	-	-	<u>£21 13 5</u>

"In the above annual statements there are no salaries put down for myself or Mrs Jackson in order to swell up the sum ; no allowance for keeping up the wardrobe ; for the expense of the company's journeys ; for the loss of the summer vacations, for want of a circular yearly plan, which has cost me so much in endeavouring to obviate by building at Aberdeen."

My weekly expenses to performers this winter, 1790, were	£100	3	0
For rents, estimated at £600 a year, music, servants,			
lights, printing, advertisements, and incidents,	-	60	5 0
		<u>£160</u>	<u>8 0</u>
Nightly expenses, at 3 nights a week,	-	-	£54 2 8
Do. do. 4 do.	-	-	<u>40 2 0</u>

* "History of Scottish Stage," p. 182.

Cash paid for different properties, houses, lands, and appendages—

Ground east of Edinburgh Theatre,	-	-	-	£550	0	0
Dr Drysdale's house, to procure the servitude upon the ground, the whole purchase £500, paid	-	-	-	200	0	0
Roofing, repairs, and necessary alterations to the Theatre,				500	0	0
Annuities in consequence of purchase of the Theatre,	-			2700	0	0
To proprietors, arrears of interest,	-	-	-	500	0	0
Painting of the theatres and scenery,	-	-	-	800	0	0
Machinery, canvas, timber, furniture, wardrobe, &c.,	-			2000	0	0
Money lost by advances to performers,	-	-	-	500	0	0
Fees and expenses of patent,	-	-	-	300	0	0
Shares of Theatre purchased,	-	-	-	340	0	0
Property on Leith Walk, -	-	-	-	105	0	0
The Glasgow property, more than	-	-	-	3000	0	0
Paid for property, buildings, and arrears at Aberdeen,	-			500	0	0
				<u>£11,995</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>

As Kemble would not accept Jackson's security for half the rent, the latter gentleman had to play, not second fiddle, but no fiddle at all throughout the season. Kemble entirely monopolised the Theatre, and Jackson was even refused admittance to his own building.

The first night of the season, under Kemble's management, was on January 19th, 1792, when the *Beggars' Opera* was played, with Bowden, the tenor, from Covent Garden, as Captain Macheath, it being his first appearance in Edinburgh. The rest of the cast was as follows:—Peachum = Bell; Mat o' the Mint = Hill; Crookfingered Jack = Moreton; Drawer = Charteris, jun.; Filch = Holland; Lucy = Mrs Hall; Mrs Peachum = Mrs Charteris; Jenny Diver = Miss Grist; Mrs Coaxer = Mrs Woods; Sukey Tawdry = Mrs Whitmore; Mrs Slammekin = Mrs Mountfort; Polly = Mrs S. Kemble—"her first appearance for five years." Nearly all the above, it will be noticed, were new to the Edinburgh stage, and had been brought by Kemble, chiefly from Newcastle.

The *Courant* says, "On Thursday night the Theatrical season commenced here. . . . Mrs Kemble in the part of Polly was received with that warmth of approbation which the natural and impressive style of her acting, the neatness and elegance of her figure, and the genuine simplicity of her demeanour so justly entitle her to. Mrs Hall possesses a pleasing voice and an expressive countenance." Regarding Bowden, it says, "To speak of this gentleman as a singer, no encomium can be too high;" the

remarks about him as an actor, however, are not so flattering. The same notice mentions that the House was lighted with wax, a practice which, up to that period, had only been indulged in on benefit nights.

Bowden took his benefit on February 1st, although his "last night of performing" had been advertised for January 28th. S. Kemble made his first appearance for the season on February 2nd. On the 11th, Colman's jumble of Tragedy, Comedy, and Opera, called *The Surrender of Calais*, was produced here. It had been produced at the Haymarket during the previous summer. The Edinburgh cast was as follows:—Eustace de St Pierre = Kemble; The King = Marriot; La Gloire = Baker; Count Ribemont (so it was spelt in the advertisements) = Woods; Madelon = Mrs Stewart; and Julia = Mrs Kemble (her original part).

February 25th, was produced for the first time in Edinburgh O'Keeffe's Comedy of *Wild Oats*. Rover = Woods; Harry Thunder = Lamash; John Dory = Kemble; Lady Amaranth = Miss Ross, being her second appearance in Scotland. Two days afterwards (27th) *The Merry Wives of Windsor* was produced, with Lee Lewes—his "first appearance for five years"—as Falstaff. March 3rd, O'Keeffe's Farce, *Modern Antiques*, for the first time here; and on the 8th, *Next Door Neighbours*, Mrs Inchbald's Comedy, in which Kemble played his original part of Manly, while Lee Lewes took that of Bluntly. Mrs Lee Lewes made her first bow to a Scottish audience on March 12th as Mrs Oakly in *The Jealous Wife*, Woods playing Oakly.

Another of Mrs Inchbald's Comedies, *The Married Man*, was played for the first time here on March 17th. Sir John Classick = Woods; Lord Lovemore = Lamash; Tradewell Classick = Kemble, being his original part when the piece was produced at the Haymarket in 1789.

Holcroft's fine comedy, *Road to Ruin*, which had been produced at Covent Garden on February 18th, 1792 (the year under consideration), was brought out in Edinburgh on March 24th—pretty smart work for those days. Harry Dornton = Woods; Old Dornton = Bell; Milford = Marriot; Sulky = Sparks; Silky = Baker; Goldfinch = Lee Lewes; Sophia = Miss Ross; Widow Warren = Mrs Lee Lewes. In London, during its first season, it ran thirty-eight nights, and in Edinburgh, although brought out so late, eleven times.

The Waterman was played the same evening (March 24th), with Meadows as Tom Tug—his second appearance here.

On April 7th, *Richard Cœur de Lion*, an Historical Romance, from

Drury Lane, was produced with new scenery by Mr Phillips. The part of Julie was played by Miss Wallack, who, with her father and mother, had previously been performing at the Circus in Leith Street. There can be small doubt that her father was William Wallack, father also of the well-known melodramatic actor and tragedian, James Wallack. William, who married an equestrian performer of the name of Mary Johannat, was a member of the famous Philip Astley's Circus Company both in London and Dublin, and in 1798 they were with T. C. Cross at the Royal Circus.* On April 21st, in the musical comedy *A Day in Turkey*, Mr and Mrs Wallack both appeared at the Royal.

The Theatre was closed from May 2nd to 12th; on the 19th, Lee Lewes took his benefit, when he gave some comic sketches with wax figures, and played in *Road to Ruin*.

The Fugitive, which had been produced by the Drury Lane Company at the Haymarket, no further back than April 20th, was played for Woods' benefit here on May 23rd. Manly, jun. = Woods; Admiral Cleveland = Kemble; Old Manly = Lee Lewes; Julia = Mrs Kemble.

The last night of the season was on June 9th, when for the manager's benefit *Notoriety*, from Covent Garden, was played for the first time here.

Mrs Kemble sang a Gaelic song, and Mr Kemble addressed the "Town."

Later in the same month Lee Lewes gave his "Comic Mirror" at the Royal, and the summer season opened on July 2nd, with John Kemble as Hamlet. Ghost = Woods; Polonius = Lee Lewes; Queen = Mrs Woods; Ophelia = Miss Ross.

July 10th, *Douglas*. Young Norval = John Kemble.

July 11th, *Coriolanus*—"never acted here." Coriolanus = John Kemble.

On the 16th Mrs Siddons again appeared. The play was *Venice Preserved*. Jaffier = Woods; Pierre = S. Kemble.

July 24th, *Othello*. Othello = S. Kemble; Desdemona = Mrs Siddons, first appearance here in that part.

The summer season closed on August 1st.

So closed Kemble's first "Royal" season, which had certainly been characterised by spirited management. He produced a large number of new plays, as has been shown; and the company, although far from per-

* Henry Wallack was another son, and Mrs Alfred Wigan a grand-daughter.

fect, was decidedly respectable. When he found out that Jackson had let the Royal to Mrs Esten and Mrs Bennett for the following season, Kemble issued an address as follows :—

“Mr Kemble begs leave most respectfully to inform the public that he hopes to have the honour of soliciting their countenance as a manager of a Theatre in this city during the ensuing winter. He feels himself at present not at liberty to enter into particulars ; but when he can do so, he humbly hopes that the opinion of the public will not be different from that of the right honourable gentlemen who have already examined into his dispute with Mr Jackson, and who have declared ‘That Mr Kemble, in the whole of the business, has conducted himself liberally, and has shown the strongest desire to have the business concluded on fair and equitable terms.’”

It may be mentioned that the Dean of Faculty’s decision, mentioned above, was given on July 18th. Although too long to be inserted, the substance of it was that Kemble was to pay Jackson half the profits out of the Theatre so long as he rented it from Jackson’s creditors. In exchange for this, Kemble was to be half proprietor with Jackson as well as sole manager, for which office he was to get a salary, the amount of which to be appointed by the Dean of Faculty.

But, as already shown, the Theatre was let to Mrs Esten for the next season, so Kemble immediately busied himself to get another building. The question now came to be *who held the patent* ? It will be remembered that that important document was made out in the joint names of the Duke of Hamilton and Henry Dundas, so a contest immediately arose between Kemble and Mrs Esten as to which was to enjoy its privileges. Mrs Esten and her mother tried very hard to obtain the sanction of Mr Dundas to her case ; but that gentleman at first declined to have anything to say in the matter. The Duke of Hamilton, however, pronounced in favour of the lady, and, eventually, Dundas nominated the Lord Advocate, the Dean of Faculty, and the Lord Provost to act for him in deciding in the matter. These gentlemen at once fixed their choice upon Kemble.

In October Kemble advertised as follows :—*“Mr Kemble has now the honour of informing the public that he has entered into an agreement with Mr Jones for the Circus, which he is determined to fit up as a Theatre, in a style of the utmost elegance,” &c. At the foot he gives a list of the company,[†] which was certainly very strong.

* *Courant*, Oct. 27th.

† See Appendix.

Mrs Esten got the start of him in opening. She herself was not on the spot, but Mrs Bennett acted for her, with Mr Williamson as manager.

On January 12th the Royal commenced its season with *Percy, Earl of Northumberland*. In addition to re-decoration, a new drop scene had been painted. The subject was the centre front of the College, "exactly as it will be when completed," with the Castle (east view), and, in the centre, the Genius of Scotland seated on a rock, receiving the Muse with open arms.

On January 21st, *Beggars' Opera*. Captain Macheath = Bowden ; Lucy = Miss Fontenelle ; Polly = Mrs Warrell.

On the same evening Kemble opened at the "New Theatre" with *The Rivals*. Sir Anthony Absolute = Lee Lewes ; Captain Absolute = Woods ; Faulkland = Archer ; Sir Lucius = Swindall ; David = Bell ; Acres = Fox, from Drury Lane ; Mrs Malaprop = Mrs Walcot, "first appearance for ten years ;" Lydia Languish = Mrs Edwin.

The scenery for the New Theatre was painted by Nasmyth ; and the amount drawn on the opening night was £182.

January 23rd, *The Revenge*. Zanga = Siddons, jun., his first appearance here ; Carlos = C. Kemble, his first appearance here. The receipts this evening were £140.

A contemporary print, speaking of the new Theatre, said—Had Dr Johnson lived to see the Circus opened as a theatre, he would have had to alter his lines spoken by Garrick at the opening of Drury Lane in 1747—

" But who the coming changes can presage,
And mark the future periods of the stage.
Perhaps where Lear has rav'd and Hamlet died
On flying cars new sorcerers may ride."

Although Kemble had commenced the campaign with such spirit, he was not allowed to carry it on very long. Mrs Esten had entered a bill of interdict and suspension on the 19th. Kemble also presented a bill of suspension, praying for a prohibition against being troubled by the respondents. Upon the first hearing the cases had to be continued, as the Duke of Hamilton's letter authorising Mrs Esten to use the patent could not be produced. On the 6th February, however, interdict was pronounced, in terms of the Statute 10th of Geo. II., against Stephen Kemble, and the new Theatre was shut up, to the great joy of Mrs Bennett

and her company, says Lee Lewes, who continues, that the "Royal company had been playing to empty benches."

The Merry Wives of Windsor was advertised for the evening of February 6th at the New Theatre, with Lee Lewes as Falstaff; but was probably never performed. A benefit for Mr Jones had also been underlined for the 11th.

Of course Kemble appealed, and proposed that till the appeal could be heard he should open the Theatre and lodge the proceeds with the Court, for it to do with as it thought right after decision; but this was objected to.

With a large company on his hands, in addition to the expense already incurred for altering the building, Kemble was truly in a plight to be pitied. He was not without expedients, however, and on March 2nd we read as follows* :—"Mr Kemble acquaints the public that by a decision of the Court of Session he is interdicted from exhibiting Plays and Farces. The New Theatre will open to-morrow with an Entertainment called *ESPERANCE*, being a concert of vocal and instrumental music, including imitations by Mr Swindall."

During the same month a Ridotto was held with success, and on April 5th a "Fête Champêtre," at which refreshments were gratis, the tickets costing 10s. 6d.

On the 10th April, a repetition of the last, being for Mr Kemble's benefit, when £160 was in the house.

All sorts of other devices were tried, and with such success that Kemble managed to keep his head above water.

On February 9th, at the "Royal," the *Haunted Tower* was given for the first time here, and on the 25th an immense crowd congregated to witness the first appearance in Edinburgh of the famous Mrs Billington, who played on that occasion Rosetta in *Love in a Village*. It had been intended that the Theatre was to have opened with Mrs Billington, and her engagement was made accordingly, but the great vocalist altered her mind, and went to Ireland prior to, instead of after, her visit to Scotland. Mr Bowden had been engaged to support her, and from the opening of the house till Mrs Billington's arrival, had scarcely ever appeared. He was to receive £10 per night and a benefit, but as his services for opera were only wanted on three occasions,

* *Courant.*

during three weeks' time, Bowden became dissatisfied, and commenced a process before the Sheriff. Of course, when Mrs Billington did arrive, his help was dispensed with, Meadows being employed instead. This aggravated Bowden very much, as will be seen from the following hand-bill which he got printed and distributed through the town :—

“TO THE PUBLIC.

“When Mrs Billington's engagement was first announced, Mr Bowden was announced at the same time. Hence the public were certainly led to expect that she was to be supported by that capital singer. Instead of which an attempt has been made to support her by Mr Meadows, who may be a very worthy man, but certainly is in a very unhappy predicament as a performer, it being perfectly obvious on Monday last that he could neither sing nor say. In this situation, it is highly proper the Pit should exercise their undoubted right of interfering; and, this night they should call for Mr Williamson the manager, and demand the reasons why the Public is so shamefully insulted, and why Mr Bowden is not suffered to appear, who is still in Edinburgh, and ready to renew his engagements on the same terms that were originally offered.

“EDINBURGH, 27th February 1793.”

Bowden very likely thought he would get up another Fennell disturbance, but was disappointed, for Meadows continued to support Mrs Billington with applause.

Bowden's case came before the Sheriff on December 11th, and the petitioner was awarded his full salary of £180, and £5 of expenses.

In the mean time, the Royal company having been reinforced by several of Kemble's late company, went on performing.

On April 6th, *Tale of the Castle; or, Who is she like?* Never yet performed. Duly licensed at the Lord Chamberlain's office. Characters by Messrs Whitlock, Williamson, Lamash, Scriven, Egan, Charteris, Chalmers; Miss Fontenelle, Mrs Munro, Mrs Jackson, Mrs Rowson, Miss Harley, and Mrs Bland.

April 15th, Wilson's Benefit; for that night only, never acted here, *The Man of the World*, from the original MS. in Wilson's possession.

Sir Pertinax Macsycophant, a Scots Gentleman = Wilson; Lord Lumbercourt = Nunns; Sidney = Williamson; Melville = Whitlock; Councillor Plausible = Lamash; Serjeant Eitherside = Baker; John = Scriven; Tomlins = Warrell; Egerton = Chalmers; Constantia = Miss Hopkins; Betty Hint = Miss Fontenelle; Lady Macsycophant = Mrs

Charteris ; Nanny = Mrs Bland ; Lady Rodolpha Lumbercourt = Mrs Nunns.

Although "for that night only," it was repeated twice.

April 27th, *Columbus*, historical play from Covent Garden ; and May 18th, *How to Grow Rich* ; both for the first time here.

The last night of the season was on May 22nd. The house reopened for the summer on June 22nd, when Mrs Esten made her first appearance since she had been lessee, playing in *The Conscious Lovers* and *The Sultan*. Two days after (24th) Palmer made his first appearance here, and on July 3rd Lewes, from Covent Garden, appeared as Vapid in *The Dramatist* ; he also played Mercutio, Benedick, Orlando, &c., to Mrs Esten's lead. The season closed on July 20th with *The Orphan*.

The next season commenced a new era in the management of the Royal, and will therefore be treated of in a separate chapter.



Stephen Kimble

CHAPTER XIV.

STEPHEN KEMBLE'S MANAGEMENT.



ACCORDING to Lee Lewes, whose statement is probably correct, Mrs Esten gave up the lease of the Royal in favour of Kemble, who on his part agreed to pay Jackson's creditors £1000 per annum, besides £200 a year to Mrs Esten for letting him get possession.

The new manager advertised on January 11th, 1794 :—" Mr Kemble does himself the honour of informing the public that the Theatre Royal will open in a few days, and that the exercise of the patent is for his *sole* emolument."

January 18th was the opening night, and *Hamlet* was played, with John Kemble in the title rôle; Ghost = Woods; Polonius = Lee Lewes; Queen = Mrs Walcot; Ophelia = Mrs Kemble; Rosencrantz = Fox; Horatio = Siddons; Marcellus = Whitmore; Laertes = C. Kemble; First Gravedigger = Nunns; Player-King = Bell; Player-Queen = Mrs Woods.

January 22nd, for the first time in Edinburgh, *The Mountaineers*, by G. Colman, jun. John Kemble in his original part of Octavian; Roque = S. Kemble; and Sadi = C. Kemble.

January 29th, "being the anniversary of King Charles the First's martyrdom, the Theatre will be closed."

February 5th, Sheridan's *Scheming Lieutenant, or St Patrick's Day*, for the first time—nearly twenty years after its first production in London. On the 8th General Reid's song, "The Garb of Old Gaul," was sung by Bell and Hallion, with full chorus, and on the 22nd John Palmer made his first appearance here, playing his original part of Joseph Surface in *School for Scandal*. During his visit he also played Shylock, and Puff in *The Critic*.

Mr Wewitzer was advertised to appear as Shadrach Boaz, the Jew, in *The Young Quaker*, on March 6th, but did not turn up till the 10th, when he played Mons. Champignone in Smollett's *The Reprisal, or The Tars of Old England*. March 11th, the *Provoked Husband*. Lord Townly = Palmer; John Moody = Wewitzer. The company was now very strong, for with Palmer, Wewitzer, Lee Lewes, Woods, Mrs Kemble, &c., any play could be well acted, and it is questionable if any theatre out of London could boast of so efficient a corps.

Palmer took his benefit on April 2nd, when *Douglas* was played, with Palmer jun. as Young Norval, his "first appearance on this stage," his father playing Glenalvon. *Rosina* was the after piece, with Miss J. Palmer—her first appearance on this stage—in the title rôle. A revival of *The Royal Martyr, or Life and Death of Charles I.*, on April 7th, is memorable, as having indirectly been the cause of Sir Walter Scott's first recorded connection with the Edinburgh Theatre. During the progress of the play a good deal of hissing was indulged in by a party of Irish students in the pit—their sympathies evidently being on the side of Democracy and in favour of the French Revolution, then at its height. Immediately some of the loyal portion of the audience ordered "God save the King" to be played by the band, and the obnoxious democrats, who sat covered during the performance, came in for a good deal of knocking about. The same sort of scene was enacted at the next representation of the piece, and on the Saturday following both parties, the democrats and loyalists, met, as if by mutual consent, in large numbers and evidently prepared to settle the matter conclusively. "God save the King" was called for and played, and the audience ordered to stand uncovered, and the democrats refusing to do this, a desperate affray ensued. Stout cudgels, brought on purpose, were freely used, and broken heads and bones became plentiful on all sides. Among the Tories Walter Scott, then a young man newly called to the bar, greatly distinguished himself by his prowess, and in after years never tired of recounting details of the fight. He used to tell in particular, and with great glee, of a solicitor's Highland apprentice, who, on hearing some one express a hope that there would be no blows, exclaimed, "Plows, by Got," and fell on the foes to monarchy with desperate earnestness. Thirty years after, Sir Walter Scott was the means of securing this gentleman (whom Scott always referred to as "Plows, by Got") an important situation in the Exchequer.

Scott wrote, after the affair, to a friend :—"You will be glad that the

affair of Saturday passed over without any worse consequences to the Loyalists than that five, including your friend and humble servant Colonel Grogg, have been bound over to keep the peace and obliged to give bail for their good behaviour, which, you may believe, was easily found. The said Colonel had no less than three broken heads laid to his charge by as many of the Democrats."

On April 14th the Provost offered £50 reward for the apprehension of the ringleaders, at the same time cautioning the public that peace officers were in nightly attendance at the Theatre to apprehend any one who caused a riot. "Plows, by Got," and his companions had, however, settled the matter for ever, and the officers were never needed.

On the 27th, A Fête Champêtre was given in the Theatre, when the pillars were hung with evergreens and sham flowers. Five hundred variegated lamps were hung round the building, and the front of the stage converted into a grand triumphal arch. *Lionel and Clarissa* was acted during the evening.

On May 3rd, a new serio-comic pantomime, written in honour of Thomson the poet, was produced. It was called *Thomson's Birthday, or The Triumph of Reason*.

On the following night but one, the Theatre was closed till May 21st, when Mrs Kemble had a benefit. The play was to have been *Lear*, with Kemble as the old king, and Mrs Kemble as Cordelia, in which part she was advertised to sing, "Oh Nanny, wilt thou gang wi' me," and "'Twas within a mile"! The programme was altered, however, to *The Conscious Lovers*, with Palmer jun. as Young Bevil.

Mrs Jackson had a benefit on May 26th, and on June 14th the season closed with Kemble's benefit, when *The Jew* was played for the first time here (it had been produced in London, for the first time, only eighteen days previously), with the following cast:—Charles Ratcliffe = Woods; Frederick = Evatt, from Covent Garden, his first appearance in Scotland; Sheva, the Jew, = Wewitzer; Eliza = Mrs Kemble.

The summer season opened on July 5th, when Mr Kemble announced that he was proud that it should fall to his lot to introduce Mr Incledon and Miss Poole to an Edinburgh audience. *Love in a Village* was played, with Young Meadows = Incledon, his first appearance in Scotland; Hawthorn = Hallion; Hodge = Wewitzer; Justice Woodcock = Wilson; Rosetta = Miss Poole, her first appearance in Edinburgh; Madge = Mrs Jackson.

Inclledon only played for a few nights, and on Wednesday the 9th *Hamlet* was given, with the chief part in the hands of an amateur ; so unimportant, evidently, was the performance considered, that it had not been advertised. The young gentleman was no other than Henry Erskine Johnston, who afterwards gained great celebrity, and at his first appearance seems to have made an extraordinary impression, a fact which the manager did not allow to be forgotten. In the *Courant* of the following day appears the following :—" Mr Kemble does himself the honour of informing the nobility and public at large that the YOUNG GENTLEMAN who performed *Hamlet* with so much credit to himself and satisfaction to the public, has kindly offered to assist the Theatre to-morrow evening, by which means many ladies and gentlemen who were disappointed of seeing the wonderful talents of this self-taught actor—this northern luminary of the stage—may be gratified ; Therefore to-morrow, Friday, June 11th, will be acted *Hamlet*." Hamlet—the Young Gentleman ; Ghost = Woods ; Ophelia = Miss Poole.

Johnston's early theatrical career was of a decidedly romantic turn. When only seventeen years of age he appeared on the stage, for which he had received no training, except when as a boy he took part in amateur theatricals. He had no sooner appeared, however, than he was hailed on all sides as the *Scottish Roscius*, and fêted in an extravagant manner. He only played a few nights in Edinburgh and then went to Dublin, not to London,* as has been often asserted. In Dublin he acted twelve nights, seven of which were performances of *Douglas*,† a part in which Johnston appears to have been very fine. Why he was not secured by the Edinburgh manager as a regular member of the company it is difficult to explain ; but the probability is decidedly in favour of Kemble not wishing to pay Johnston as much as the latter would undoubtedly want.

In the Thespian Dictionary it is stated that Johnston acted Harlequin as well as Hamlet on his first appearance ; there is, however, no proof of this to be found, and it is certain that he did not act Harlequin on his second appearance.

William Kelly, the famous singer and composer, appeared on July 14th as Lionel in *Lionel and Clarissa*, being his first appearance in Scot-

* His first appearance in London was 29th October 1797.

† Thespian Dictionary. The account given of Johnston in Stage Reminiscences by an Old Stager, is absurdly wrong from beginning to end.

land. *Clarissa* by Mrs Crouch, likewise her first appearance here ; for her benefit, on July 21st, Mrs Crouch produced the *Haunted Tower*.

On the 23rd the "young gentleman" had a benefit, *Douglas* being the piece performed, with an occasional prologue "written by a gentleman of this city," and spoken by Mr Woods. The young gentleman (Johnston) of course acted Young Norval, and created a profound sensation. Previous to this time the part had been dressed in the trews and Scottish jacket, but when Johnston stepped on to the stage in full Highland costume—in kilt, breast-plate, shield, claymore, and bonnet,—the whole house rose and gave him a reception such as had seldom been heard within the walls of the building. It must be remembered, in charity, that reform in stage dressing had not at that time been thought of. The venerable author was present, and at the conclusion pronounced Johnston to be the beau-ideal of his conception. *Catherine and Petruchio* was given as an afterpiece, with *Petruchio* by Johnston.

Johnston played again on the 25th for the benefit of Wewitzer, the play being *Oroonoko*, and the season closed with a benefit to Kelly on the 26th.

Upon the whole, Kemble had contrived a very successful season—one that compared only too favourably with those that succeeded.

The writer who—under the name of Timothy Plain,* during the last years of the century—made himself famous as the best of the many self-appointed dramatic critics of the day, in speaking from memory of Kemble's company in 1795, says they were a strange lot, and except Woods and Rock, there was not a name worth mentioning, the female part of the house being confined to Mrs Kemble and the Honourable Mrs Twiselton ; as a matter of fact, neither Rock nor Mrs Twiselton appeared at all during 1795.

The opening play (January 26th) was *Merchant of Venice*, Kemble playing Shylock, and Woods, Bassanio ; while, of course, Portia was in the hands of Mrs Kemble. Blanchard from Covent Garden made his first appearance here as Launcelot, and Barnet, tenor, from the same house, as Lorenzo.

On the 28th *The Mountaineers* was played, with Siddons, who had come from Liverpool, as Octavian.

Johnston was engaged for six nights, and made his first appearance on February 16th, when his name was inserted in the bills for the first time in Edinburgh.

* Said to have been Stewart Thriepland, advocate.

On February 23rd, Mr Stordy, from the Theatre Royal, Dublin, made his first appearance in Scotland. Johnston played Tancred in *Tancred and Sigismunda* for the first time on March 14th, and George Barnwell (for his own benefit) on April 1st.

Miss Barnet's benefit only drew £15, so, as the charges were £40, Kemble allowed her another night.

On May 14th Mrs Siddons appeared. On the 27th she made her first appearance in the part of Palmyra (*Mahomet*) in Edinburgh; two nights later, Isabella in *Measure for Measure*, and on the 30th Hermione in *The Distressed Mother*, for the first time on the Edinburgh stage. Vast crowds again flocked to the playhouse to hear the incomparable actress, and, for the convenience of his Leith patrons, Kemble ran an omnibus to that seaport after the play was over, at the fare of 1s. per head.

The performance on May 30th closed the season.

A summer season opened on July 15th, 1795, with John Kemble as Richard III. On the 28th the house closed.

On January 23rd, 1796, the winter season opened with *The Fair Penitent*. Calista by the Honourable Mrs Twisleton (engaged for six nights only), her first appearance in Scotland. Sciolto = Woods; Horatio = Grant; Lothario = Egan; Rossano = M'Kenzie, from Bath, his first appearance in Scotland; Lucilla = Mrs Grant, late Miss Jones.

Grant had appeared during the preceding season for the first time on any stage. Kemble evidently endeavoured to make him as great a success as Johnstone, and for that purpose pushed him into good parts, and as the company was far from strong, he very likely appeared to some advantage. Miss Jones, whom he had married, made her first appearance on any stage as Jessica on the opening night of the preceding season; she was most likely a daughter of Jones of the Circus.

Several plays new to Edinburgh were produced during the season. These included Reynolds' *Speculation* (February 13th), Rock appearing as Alderman Arable, *Zorinski* (February 22nd), *Man of Ten Thousand* (February 20th), and *Mysteries of the Castle*.

An epilogue was written by Captain Topham for a performance of *The Way to Get Married* on February 15th. On February 29th, Aickin from Covent Garden, and manager of the Theatre Royal, Liverpool, appeared as Beverley in *The Gamester*, and on March 21st took his benefit, when John Palmer was announced to appear; but having been assaulted and his leg badly wounded, was unable to do so.

A benefit was given on March 30th towards defraying the loss incurred by selling meal to the poor at a reduced price, on which occasion *Douglas* was played, with Johnston—who gave his services gratis—as Young Norval. Johnston played other six nights, acting on April 6th the part of Zaphna in *Mahomet* for the first time.

The season closed on May 4th, to reopen for the summer on the 30th of the same month with *Hamlet*, for the benefit of the Charity Workhouse. *Hamlet*, by Johnston, who gave his services free.

So soon as June 3rd this actor again played for a charity—a free benefit being given towards a fund to be established for the relief of infirm and decayed actors. Still another charity benefit was given on the 7th, for the widow and children of Benson, who had died shortly before.

The house was closed from June 17th until July 2nd, when Miss Wallis from Covent Garden opened as Juliet to Siddons' Romeo; the only other appearance of consequence being that of Incledon, who played for a few nights prior to the closing, on July 22nd.

During the autumn quite a number of amateur performances were given in the Theatre. Grant seems to have had something to do with most of these; the only thing worth recording being the production of a Scots Pastoral called *Jamie and Bess*, the characters by “natives of Edinburgh.”

On January 16th, 1797, the ever popular *Douglas* was put forward to open the winter campaign, Miss Gough, from Dublin, appearing as Lady Randolph, being her first appearance in Scotland; Miss Kemble, daughter of the manager, also making her debut in Edinburgh in the part of Anna.

Between the play and the farce, Mr Ryley, from Liverpool, gave his popular entertainment, *New Brooms* and *Lovers' Quarrels*.

The company got together this year by Kemble was undeniably bad. This fact was very freely commented upon by “Timothy Plain” in a series of letters he addressed to the editor of the *Scots Chronicle*. In the first of these, he says :—

“Till lately, Edinburgh was stamped, by all ranks in the three kingdoms, even by actors themselves, as a critical, judicious, audience. It was not in London, nor anywhere else, viewed as a *country* Theatre. When any performer had met with a decent portion of applause in Edinburgh, go where he would thereafter, it was posted up in capitals, ‘The part of Romeo by Mr — from Edinburgh,’ in the same way as they are announced when they have played in London or Dublin.”

“ . . . I admit we *have* performers of some merit here. Mr Woods, as an actor, and as

a man, needs no panegyric from me. The manager himself, keep him in a certain line, may be agreeable. Mr Rock is very admissible as a low comedian, and Mr Scriven might pass, were it not for a certain pertness in his manner, which must always disgust. Mrs Kemble is a good actress in many characters. Miss Gough is a good figure, and her abilities far above mediocrity; although she will never go down as an object to draw a house *of herself*, which Mr Kemble seems to suppose."

Woods and Rock, he says in another place, received each £2 per week, which were the largest salaries in the company, the remainder of which, he continues, was composed of your Egans, Barnets, Siddonses, Bews, and "such fellows as could roam no where" but at the Theatre Royal, Edinburgh!

On February 3rd, Timothy Plain objects to ghosts being let down through squeaking trap doors, preferring, he says, to see them walk off and on. On the following day, Kemble advertises a reward of 42s. to find out the person who got under the stage and cut the ropes of the traps, at the same time affirming it had been done by some discarded servants, who had been in the habit, for some time back, of frequenting the gallery and hissing. This and a note appended to the cast given for the *Rivals* on the same evening was very probably intended as sarcasm aimed at Timothy Plain:—"Mr Kemble, with the utmost deference, recommends the consideration of the cast of the above comedy to the public. He flatters himself that no company in Great Britain can perform it to more advantage,"—not bad for Mr Kemble. The cast was as follows:—Sir Anthony Absolute = Kemble; Falkland = Siddons; Acres = Scriven; David = Rock; Captain Absolute = Woods; Julia = Miss Gough; Mrs Malaprop = Mrs Walcot; Lucy = Mrs Bland; Lydia = Mrs Kemble (first time of playing the character).

Timothy Plain, in afterwards criticising this production, very naturally remarks that if he had not been told to expect so much, he would have perhaps been better pleased; as it was, the performance was fairly good all round, and the play ran several nights.

On February 15th the play of *Tamerlane* was revived here, with the addition to its name of "*The Great*." Kemble played Bajazet; Woods, Tamerlane; and Miss Gough, Alpasia.

An interesting performance was a benefit given on March 1st of this year, for the "widow and five infant children of the late Mr Burns." This undoubtedly refers to the family of the great poet, for in addition to *The Rivals*, and the musical farce of *My Grandmother*, a recital

was given, between the pieces, of "The Cottar's Saturday Night" by Miss Gough.

March 13th, Mrs Kemble's benefit. *Cure for the Heartache*, first time here, and the *Shipwreck* (Farce), first time also. Wood put on *Alonzo*, by J. Home, for his benefit on the 27th; and Kemble, on April 10th, played for his own benefit *Wives as they were and Maids as they are*, being its first time of playing here.

The regular season closed on April 29th, but the house re-opened on June 6th for the summer, with Miss Wallis from Covent Garden, who continued on till about the 17th, when the Theatre was again closed till July 5th, when *Bold Stroke for a Wife* was played, with John Bannister jun. as Colonel Feignwell, his first appearance in Scotland.

Other parts played by Bannister were, Young Sadboy in *Young Quaker*, Bob Acres, Scrub in *Beaux' Stratagem*, Touchstone, &c. The last night of the summer season was August 5th.

The opening of the following season was heralded in very glowing terms by the management in their advertisements, and a list of the company appeared at full length in the papers. Four of the new members were announced as from Drury Lane, regarding which Timothy Plain caustically remarks, that an actor must have something else to recommend him than merely coming either from Drury Lane or the Theatre at Calcutta.

Lee Lewes, Woods, Rock, Scriven, Miss Gough and Mrs Kemble were all good artists, but their forte lay chiefly in Comedy; while for Tragedy only Miss Gough and Woods could be called even respectable.

The first night was on January 8th, 1798, when *Way to get Married* was given, with Captain Faulkner = Campbell, from Drury Lane, his first appearance here; Caustic = Denman, also from the "Lane," and first appearance; Toby Allspice = Scriven; M'Query = Rock; Clementina = Miss Biggs; and *The Waterman*; Tom Tug = Cooke, from Drury Lane, his first appearance here.

On January 11th a benefit was given for the widows and children of soldiers and sailors who fell in the British fleet when the gallant Viscount Duncan obtained so decisive a victory over the Dutch on October 11th. *The Brothers* was played, and between the play and farce "Hearts of Oak" was sung by Messrs Cooke, Denman, Scriven, Bland, Decamp, Mrs Bramwell, Mrs Bew, Mrs Bland and Miss Biggs.

A performance of *Douglas* on January 13th gave Timothy Plain a

chance of making some remarks, which, so far as they set forth the qualities of the principal members of the company, are quoted below.

“The part of Douglas was filled by Mr Campbell, who is one of those that are said to be from the Theatre Royal, Drury Lane. I have witnessed many attempts to make something of this character; but, Mr Siddons excepted, I have never met with anything on the stage that tortured both my eyes and ears so much as Mr Campbell’s Young Norval . . . his conception of the character is erroneous in many places . . . Old Norval=Mr Denman.—In the hands of even a decent performer this part must always be interesting, and of much consequence in the piece. On Saturday it passed over almost as much unnoticed as the officer who announces that the banquet waits.

“So much for two of our new performers ‘from the Theatre Royal, Drury Lane’!!! I have known scene shifters come from that Theatre . . . Miss Kemble’s appearance put me in mind of a good fat, well-dressed cook. . . . *The Prompter* spoke the part of Baptista in the Farce.”

On the 20th, *School for Scandal*, in which Lee Lewes, it seems, really shone out as Sir Peter Teazle, and Woods gave an admirable account of Joseph. Mrs Kemble, who had been unwell for some time, reappeared for the first time during the season, playing Lady Teazle.

The after-piece was *Rosina*, with Mrs Hindmarsh, from Covent Garden, in the title rôle, her first appearance here.

An unpleasant occurrence took place during the progress of the comedy on this evening, which is worth recording as showing a state of manners among military men, unusual even at that date in its barbarism and, happily, extinct now. Some persons dressed as officers, who were behind the scenes, were constantly obtruding themselves upon the stage, to such a degree as to cause clamour and disturbance from the house. At the beginning of the fifth act one of the officers came forward to the front of the stage, whence he would not move, although freely pelted with oranges, &c.; a proceeding which this resolute son of Mars resented by throwing back the missiles, and with a candle socket which he plucked from a bracket over his head, he inflicted a severe cut upon a lady’s breast.

At last several gentlemen sprang from the pit to the stage, and succeeded in driving the half-drunken officers away. This, however, did not end the matter, for the audience called for the manager, until he appeared in company with another gentleman. The latter acting as spokesman, assured the audience, on the part of the manager, that no such thing should happen in future. Timothy Plain, from whom the above account is taken, is extremely bitter in his remarks upon such an outrage being permitted by Kemble, who, undoubtedly, was to blame.

On the 31st January, Lee Lewes acted Falstaff in the *Merry Wives*; and on February 5th the comedy of *Cheap Living* was produced for the first time here. Two evenings after, by desire of the Right Honourable the Countess of Balcarres, the new MS. comedy of the *Heir at Law* was played for the first time in Edinburgh. Curiously, in the list of characters as advertised, Dr Pangloss is omitted; the others were allotted as follows:—Daniel Dowlas = Rock; Stedfast = Woods; Dick Dowlas = Melvin; Zekiel Homespun = Scriven; Cecily (printed Cecilia in the announcement) = Mrs Kemble. Although not announced, Pangloss was taken by Lee Lewes, who seems to have made much of the part.

On February 21st a “new musical entertainment,” entitled *St Kilda in Edinburgh, or News from Camperdown*, was given for the first time in Edinburgh. It was said to be from the pen of a young clergyman, and is described by Timothy Plain as a piece “replete with the grossest indecency.”

Lee Lewes, for his benefit, spoke a parody on the 16th Ode of the 2nd Book of Horace, and recited a whimsical story in Pindaric verse respecting “Benjamin Bolus, the Newcastle apothecary.”

The famous play, *The Castle Spectre*, which in London had enjoyed a tremendous run when first produced,* was brought out here on March 12th, with new scenery by Nasmyth.† The parts were distributed as follows:—Osmond = Woods; Reginald = Denman; Percy = Campbell; Father Philip = Rock; Motley = Scriven; Kenrick = Bew; Saib = Allen; Hassan = Melvin; Angela (with the epilogue) = Mrs Kemble; Alice = Miss Biggs; Evelina = Miss Gough.

Regarding this performance, the *Courant* said:—“*The Castle Spectre*, the most splendid drama ever brought forward in Scotland. The house, at an early hour, overflowed. The dresses costly and elegant; the scenery, by Naismith [*sic*], sublime and beautiful; and the performance in general excellent. Mr Woods, Miss Gough, Mr Rock, Mr Melvin, and Mrs Kemble never appeared to greater advantage.” . . . The remainder of the notice being devoted to praising the manager’s liberality in producing the play, leads one to suspect that Kemble had something to do with its composition, or at least its insertion, and it is more edifying to read Timothy Plain’s outspoken utterances regarding the production. He says the scenery was really beautiful, the dresses only passable, and the

* Forty-seven times in London, twelve times in Edinburgh.

appropriate "decorations" mentioned by the management he supposes to have been the tar links used for torches, the smoke from which nearly suffocated the audience!

Elliston, from Covent Garden, made his first appearance here on April 2nd, when he appeared as Sheva in *The Jew*. On the 4th he appeared as Dr Pangloss in the *Heir at Law*, a performance which Plain records as much inferior to Lee Lewes'. During his engagement (originally announced to be for only five nights, but afterwards extended), Elliston played Sir Edward Mortimer in *The Iron Chest*, first time here, Young Norval, Octavian in the *Mountaineers*, Hamlet, &c.

The season closed on April 30th, after which the company went to Glasgow, and opened there on May 5th, whence they returned and reopened in Edinburgh for the summer season on July 2nd, when Thomas Knight, from Covent Garden, was announced to make his first appearance before an Edinburgh audience, playing Sir Harry Beagle in *The Jealous Wife* to the Mrs Oakly of Mrs Mattocks, also from Covent Garden. In the after piece, *The Farm House*, Mrs Knight appeared as Aura. After the Knights' and Mattocks' engagement was over, the Theatre closed for a few nights, and then reopened on July 23rd, with *Romeo and Juliet*. Romeo = Pope; Mercutio = Woods; Juliet = Mrs Pope.

On July 31st was held the annual competition of pipers, and the season closed with *Inkle and Yarico*, on August 4th.

The next winter season opened on January 19th 1799, with the new play of *The Stranger*, which, according to the advertisements, was acted from a MS. copy sent direct to Kemble from Drury Lane. As the "Stranger" Mr H. Siddons made his reappearance, Bew took the part of Baron Steinfort, Scriven of Peter, and Mrs Kemble of Mrs Haller.

The almost total absence of anything of interest this season, and the really wretched company Kemble had got together, must have made playgoers of the time think that theatricals had reached their lowest ebb. A pretty elaborate production of the dramatic romance of *Blue Beard*, with scenery by Nasmyth, was produced during the season, and ran some twenty-five nights. John Kemble played a few nights, commencing March 16th, and the season closed early in May to reopen for the summer on July 8th, when Mrs Siddons and Incledon appeared in succession.

Mrs Atkins' first appearance in Scotland is worth noting, on August 3rd, as Polly in *The Beggars' Opera* to Incledon's Macheath.

The season came to an end on August 17th 1799.

On the 2nd of May 1799, the *Courant* contained the following advertisement :—

“S A N S S O U C I.”

The inhabitants of Edinburgh and its vicinity are respectfully informed that this evening, Thursday, May 2nd, at the Assembly Rooms, George Street, New Town, will be performed a new and popular entertainment called

A TOUR TO THE LAND'S END.

ARRANGEMENT OF THE RECITATIONS AND SONGS.

PART 1.

Part of Wiltshire, of Dorsetshire, and of South Devonshire.

Recitation,	The Nation.	Song,	Laughing prohibited.
Song,	Temple of Fame.	Recit., Plymouth Dock and Nautical	
Recit.,	Dialects.	Anecdotes.	
Song,	Strawberries.	Song,	The Anchorsmiths.
Recit.,	The Rencounter.	Recit.,	Country Parties.
Song,	Nancy.	Song,	The Tea Table.
Recit.,	Curiosity and the Makers.		

PART 2.

Cornwall.

Recit.,	Falmouth.	Song,	Advice.
Song,	Yo, Heave Ho.	Recit.,	Travellers' Wit.
Recit.,	Wigs.	Song,	The Cornish Miners.
Song,	The Wig Gallery.	Recit.,	Flattery.
Recit.,	The Drowning Sailor.	Song,	Lady's Diary.
Song,	Magnanimity.	Recit.,	Tactics.
Recit.,	John and Providence.	Song,	Beauty's Banners.

PART 3.

North Devon and Somersetshire.

Song,	Nelson and Warren.	Song,	The Jew Pedlar.
Recit.,	Two Beggars.	Recit.,	Singers.
Song,	The Barrel Organ.	Song,	Cupid turned Musicmaster.
Recit.,	Compassion.	Recit.,	News from Dorsetshire.
Song,	True Courage.	Song,	The Christening.
Recit., The Country Man's Description		Recit.,	Recapitulation.
of London.		Song,	Finale.

* * The whole is written, composed, and will be spoken, sung, and accompanied on an organised instrument, which has the properties of a band,

By Mr DIBDIN.

Admittance 3s. Doors open at 7, and performance to begin at 8.

Tickets to be had at Messrs Muir, Wood, & Co., musical instrument makers to his Majesty, No. 16 George Street ; Mr John Muir's, merchant, front of the Exchange ; Messrs Urbani &

Liston's, Princes Street, of whom may be had the songs in all Mr Dibdin's Entertainments of *SANS SOUCI* ; The Popular Novel of Hannah Hewit—The Younger Brother—A Complete History of the Stage, a periodical work, and every other article in Mr Dibdin's catalogue.

✍ Mr Dibdin respectfully announces that his stay at Edinburgh will be very short, his tour to the different parts of the Kingdom being so completely arranged as to employ his whole time till his opening of his *Sans Souci* in Leicester Place, under the auspices of the Lord Chamberlain, on the 5th October next. The entertainments will be perfectly distinct and different every night.

This seems to have been the first appearance in Scotland of England's one national song writer, who had crossed the border on the previous Sunday, and reached Edinburgh on Tuesday evening ; having travelled by way of Langholm, Hawick, and Selkirk, and taken a sketch, "according to custom," of the city when it came in view. In his "Observations on a Tour in England and Scotland" (1801), he says :—

"As I entered this city by the road from Selkirk I had an opportunity of seeing it from one extremity to the other, which was literally a climax both as to effect and situation ; for having been precipitated to the bottom of the Calton Hill, we gradually ascended in winding directions from among the throng of streets (where loaves, stockings, pitchers, hats, cabbages, and numbers of other incongruous particulars were painted against the houses to denote the occupations of their inhabitants, who live up stairs into one street and down stairs into another, burrowing like so many rabbits in a warren), to first the South Bridge ; thence we passed to the North Bridge, and at length arrived at a lodging which had been taken for me in George Street."

In the description of the commerce and buildings of the city which follows, there is, strange to say, no mention of the Theatre. The only reference to anything having to do with any of the arts, is a mention of Scots music, as "their own beautifully simple and sweetly plaintive melodies," which, it seems, were in danger of being superseded by an affectation of Italian taste. "Rizzio improved Scotch music ; modern Italians mutilate and destroy it."

The "Tour to the Land's End" had been produced in London the previous year, and consisted of material collected during a trip to the Southern Counties of England. As will be seen from the advertisement, it contained a number of well-known songs, such as "Yo, heave ho !" "The Anchorsmiths," and "Nancy," and, like all Dibdin's numerous table entertainments, consisted of a number of songs, and recitations in a narrative setting, plentifully seasoned with puns, epigrams, and anecdotes. Of his manner of entertaining, O'Keeffe, who saw him in 1792, says, "His manner of coming on the stage was in the most happy style. He ran on in a sprightly manner, and with nearly a laughing face, like a friend who

enters heartily to impart some good news. Nor did he disappoint his audience; he sang and accompanied himself on an instrument, which was a concert in itself—he was, in fact, himself his own band. A few lines of speaking happily introduced his admirable songs, full of wit and character, and his peculiar mode of singing them surpassed all I had ever heard.”

On Saturday 4th May, *The Sphinx* was advertised, on Monday 6th, *Will o' the Wisp*, and on Tuesday 7th, *Castles in the Air* and *King and Queen*. He left next day for Glasgow, but returned to repeat *The Sphinx* on the 16th, and *Will o' the Wisp* on the 18th. This latter performance, which was announced as the “last night,” was given at the Old Assembly Rooms, King's Arms Tavern, High Street, because, so the advertisement ran, he had been advised by constant frequenters of Sans Souci that he would be heard there to more advantage. On the 23rd he concluded by advertising his thanks to the inhabitants for his reception in Edinburgh.

Kemble's last season in Edinburgh opened on January 25th 1800, Mr Quick being engaged as a special attraction for twelve nights. Previous to the opening, and in order to announce that event, Mr Kemble issued an address, in which, after making various promises, he continues that he trusts his endeavours will “ensure to him a continuance of that honourable patronage which he has always hitherto received from the Edinburgh audience, and which it will be the pride of his life to acknowledge; it will comfort him in his banishment. Mr KEMBLE thinks his successors will be fortunate if they are more successful than he has been. Of this he is at least certain, they cannot more anxiously desire to obtain the approbation of the public.”

This announcement seems to have stirred up the zealous wrath of an individual who signs himself “Crito,” and who wrote and published a letter addressed to Mr Kemble. He uses as his text the paragraph quoted above, and has left an epistle of a nature which, if addressed to a theatrical manager now-a-days, would undoubtedly be discussed in a court of law.

“You found,” Crito says, “the people of Scotland no less generous than intelligent. You found an audience capable of supporting and rewarding the most splendid efforts of dramatic genius. You found a green-room occupied by the most able of the profession, under the management of Mrs Esten. The struggle betwixt you and that lady only excited the public attention in a higher degree than formerly to the Drama, and made an entertainment popular, which was before almost exclusively confined to the upper classes. You found a public disposed to pity you for misfortunes they imagined to be real. Trusting to your professions, they relinquished their national character of circumspection and, with a noble generosity,

stood forward to assist you with their credit and protection. The lovers of the drama, disgusted with the troubled management of Jackson, and the unsteady exertions of Mrs Esten, hailed in the brother of Mrs Siddons theatrical brilliancy. These were your prospects; these were the expectations of the public when you assumed the management. It required even ingenuity to fail, and you have succeeded in doing so."

Then, in return for all the Edinburgh public had done for him, "Crito" says that he discharged all the old hands in order to make way for the "scum of strolling parties"; some who had been discharged—to wit, Mrs Charteris for example—were driven to great straits in order to earn a living, and had they been retained in their places on the Theatre, many among the public, who had discontinued their attendance, would have still frequented their accustomed places.

Even Rock, "Crito" says, the last good actor left, was suffered to depart, and was not brought back until the audience issued an imperative demand for his re-institution. "Crito's" pamphlet is dated two days prior to the opening of the Theatre, which, as already stated, was on January 25th, with Quick as Sir Benjamin Dove in the *Brothers*. Quick had retired from the London stage two years previous to this with a fortune, it was said, of £10,000; so that this visit to Edinburgh must have been a part of a provincial tour with which he was, as it were, tapering off his stage connection. A critic, who in the pages of the *Monthly Mirror* signs himself "A Lounger," speaks of him as an "excellent comedian," and says he "hopes he is still to be considered as a London performer." The same critic mentions about Henry Siddons that, "the improvement, which was last year so manifest, has not ceased to advance. By dint of application, he has vanquished to an unexpected degree the natural imperfections under which he laboured." Macready (the elder), or M'Cready as "A Lounger" spells his name, was leading actor, a fact which, of itself, goes far to justify the remarks made by "Crito" as to the wretched acting capabilities of Kemble's company; but what was worse even than the small number of even decent actors, was the slovenly and unsuitable way in which pieces were cast for production.

That most excellent critic, "Timothy Plain," continued his strictures on the performances this season. He says:—

"Our present theatrical season was announced in a style of such humility and despondency, as made me for some time waver whether I should continue my strictures or not. . . . Who does not pity Romeo when that word *banishment* is pronounced against him? But, on the other hand, there is, with all his whining meanness, an arrogant pretension to merit, which together with a recollection of the manager's parsimonious conduct as caterer for the public

taste, his illegitimate bantlings and incongruous medleys, banished the idea of compassion, and made me resolve still to continue my correspondence. At the same time, as 'mercy should always season justice,' I shall probably be rather sparing of my remarks during the last campaign of this Theatrical Potentate. I hope he will acquire

'Philosophy's sweet milk to comfort him withal.'

And he has in the mean time got some good Caledonian cash, which, I am persuaded, will be no bad substitute with him."

"Plain" proceeds after this to criticise the various members of the company in straightforward enough terms, and it is worth noting that he speaks highly in praise of Macready's abilities in "genteel comedy," in addition to mentioning that he was possessed of "a handsome person, genteel deportment, an expressive countenance, and an ability to tread the stage with ease."

During the spring *Pizarro* was produced, with considerable success. The scenery seems to have been poor, and the stage business, "Plain" says, "so miserably conducted that the scenes intended to have the highest effect in the solemn and pathetic, excited the risible faculties, of pit, boxes, and gallery." Mrs Kemble found in Cora a part eminently suited to her. To Siddons' lot fell Rolla, and "Plain" is particularly censorious in his remarks on his performance. A very cleverly written letter in the *Monthly Mirror*, however, takes a somewhat different view of the matter, and says in particular that Siddons improved every night the play was acted.

The season closed at the end of the first week of May.

According to Charles Dibdin's "Tour," he returned to Scotland for a longer visit in 1800, and crossed the Forth (from Pettycur?) to Leith on the 29th of June, after having made his usual sketch of the marvellous panorama of Edinburgh from the Fife coast. It is most probable that he gave his "Sans Souci" entertainments during this visit, but no advertisements of them are to be found in the *Courant*, so the matter must remain doubtful. Whether he performed or not, he had business at the Parliament House; "for the Lords of Session had just granted me an injunction to prohibit three musicsellers at Edinburgh, one at Perth, and one at Glasgow, from pirating my songs, a circumstance which, as in other similar instances in London and other parts of England, has ended in expense without affording the smallest remedy." Again the "Tour" is silent as to the Theatres, but among other visits Dibdin and his family went to see the French prisoners, "who performed for us a grand ballet in capital style." Here follow some characteristic remarks on the character of the


French, "our natural enemies," and the paragraph concludes :—"Willing to reward them for that servility, which after our departure was sure to turn into ridicule, we bought their baubles, saw their show, paid them handsomely, and came away."

On July 14th a summer season opened, with John Kemble as an attraction. It was advertised as this actor's "last appearance in Edinburgh," a statement which greatly excited the wrath of "Plain." Siddons, Swendall, Miss Biggs and Macready, had all left the company, reducing it materially in strength ; in fact, according to the *Monthly Mirror* critic, its positive incapacity was an insult to John Kemble and the Edinburgh public. On the 30th July, *Pizarro* was played, and at the conclusion Stephen Kemble came forward to give his farewell address to the public of Edinburgh. After thanking the public for having generously supported him "on many trying occasions," he said, "though his followers might be more successful, they could not be more ambitious or anxious to please—he might almost take it upon him to assert he *had* given satisfaction"—At this point he was interrupted with considerable murmurs and some hissing ; but he continued—"I once thought to have left Edinburgh without a single enemy behind me"—the hissing then increased, but he proceeded. "It is, however, not wonderful that I am disappointed, for even our great Redeemer had his enemies ; and after his great example (at this phrase he clapped his hands on his great fat paunch) I will be meek and submissive"!! The row that ensued upon this was tremendous, and after again essaying to speak, Kemble had to retire in terror of being pelted !

So ended the reign of Stephen Kemble in Edinburgh.

CHAPTER XV.

JACKSON AGAIN MANAGER.

HE next season opened with a complete change in the management. John Jackson,* in company with Mr Aickin,† of Liverpool, having assumed command, considerable expectations were raised as to the manner in which they would conduct the Theatre. An anonymous writer, under the name of "Candidus," describes the opening of the Theatre as follows :—‡

"We crowded to the house to mark the necessary alterations upon it ; but what did they amount to ? The outside was whitened like a pie-shop, the inside loaded with unnecessary gilding ; permanent boxes were erected upon the stage. The stage was diminished by adding some few seats to the pit ; the scenery most deficient, broken crystals patched with tin plates. In short, everything showed that the manager alone was changed ; but what was still more glaring, the system of *Fennellism*, unsuccessfully attempted in 1788, was in 1800 renewed, and has finally prevailed. On the first night of performing, Mr Grant (whom we were, notwithstanding, all glad to see on our stage again) was thrust into the part of Sir Philip Blandford, one of Mr Woods' characters."

Jackson, it would seem, pleaded want of time to make more thorough repairs. After his first season, however, (during which it was commonly said he cleared £3000), almost nothing more was done to the Theatre, while the company was if anything weakened instead of strengthened.

The first season of the new management was really remarkable for nothing. Half of it elapsed before proper dresses were procured, and the orchestra seemed only to attend at their own pleasure.§

A benefit for the Canongate Workhouse brought the season to a close on May 6th, on which occasion Mrs Esten recited Collins' "Ode to the Passions."

The house was again opened for the summer months on June 27th

* Chambers says Jackson became ostensible purchaser for £8020.

† Brother of J. Aickin, formerly of Edinburgh.

‡ The Theatre, or Letters of Candidus, &c., 1802.

§ Letters of Candidus.

1801 with *School for Scandal*, cast as follows :—Sir Peter = Rock ; Joseph Surface = Woods ; Sir Benjamin Backbite = Williams, his first appearance in Scotland ; Moses = Smith, his first appearance in Scotland ; Charles Surface = Talbot, from Drury Lane, his first appearance here ; Mrs Candour = Mrs Francis, her first appearance here ; Lady Teazle = Miss Biggs, from Drury Lane, also her first appearance here.

On July 6th G. F. Cooke made his first appearance in Scotland, playing Shylock, and on the 9th Iago to Talbot's Othello, while on the 13th the parts were reversed. One of the other characters he acted was Sir Giles Overreach, of which Sir Walter Scott has left a very interesting criticism.* "Kemble's Sir Giles Overreach," he says, "was not within a hundred miles of Cooke, whose terrible visage, and short, abrupt, and savage utterance gave a reality almost to that extraordinary scene in which he boasts of his own villainy to a nobleman of worth and honour, of whose alliance he is ambitious. Cooke contrived somehow to impress upon the audience the idea of such a monster of enormity as had learned to pique himself even upon his own atrocious character. But Kemble was too handsome, too plausible, and too smooth."

The summer season closed on July 22nd.

The Theatre was open from November 21st to December 23rd 1801 ; but the regular winter season appears to have commenced on January 23rd 1802 with *The Belle's Stratagem*. Doricourt = Young ; Letitia Hardy = Miss Duncan. The Mr Young mentioned above was Charles Mayne Young, afterwards the famous tragedian. He played lead during this whole season.

Scott's friendliness to the members of the theatrical profession is well known, and Charles Young was the first actor he saw much of. As early as 1803 he mentions him as a friend, and he continued so all through life.

It is perhaps well to note here that Miss Smith, afterwards Mrs Bartley, was another favourite of Scott's. About 1809 his chief theatrical friends were John Philip Kemble and his sister, Mrs Siddons, both of whom he appears to have met often at Lord Abercorn's villa near Stanmore. Kemble's love of dramatic antiquities afforded a strong bond of fellowship, "and I have heard Scott say that the only man who ever seduced him into very deep potations in his middle life was Kemble." "He was frequently at Ashestiel, and the 'fat Scotch butler,' whom Mr Skene has described to us, by name John Macbeth, made sore complaints

* P. 235 of Life.

of the bad hours kept on such occasions in one of the most regular of households." Kemble was a bad rider, and Scott used to chuckle over the recollection of an excursion to the Vale of the Ettrick, near which river the party were pursued by a bull. "Come, King John," said Scott, "we mus' e'en take the water," and, accordingly, he and his daughter plunged into the stream. But King John, halting on the bank and surveying the river, which happened to be full and turbid, exclaimed in his usual solemn manner,

"The flood is angry, Sheriff;
Methinks I'll get me up into a tree."

However, there were no trees handy, and had the dogs not diverted the attention of the bull, King John had like to have fared somewhat badly.

On April 19th Mr Woods took his farewell benefit, being his last appearance on the stage. He played Captain Faulkner in the *Way to get Married*, and afterwards took a formal farewell in an address from his own pen :—

"When here a public, that with truth presides,
And still the actor's efforts stamps or guides,
Exerts acknowledg'd right with generous sway,
We hear with reverence or with zeal obey.
From due regret, then, how can he refrain,
Who quits the scene such liberal laws sustain?
Where the just critic and kind patron blend,
Who called to judge is willing to commend.
Such have you been to me; for many a year
My mind retraces, such you now appear,
When my "young skill" near great Mandane try'd,
The fear that chequer'd hope you bade subside.
In arduous scenes, which matchless SIDDONS grac'd,
My anxious efforts still your kindness traced.
Sanction'd by you, the Drama, as I rang'd
Thro' changful periods, ne'er your candour changed.
Long on the spot thus honoured to appear,
And from the accustom'd scene departure near,
While these respected vows I hail this night,
By taste distinguished, and with beauty bright,
While this kind act brings all the past to view,
Deign to accept a grateful, last adieu.
Whate'er to me of *life* be henceforth known,
Reflections oft will point to favour shown;
And while it boasts, by you bestow'd, essay
To tell how priz'd—but words can ne'er convey—

Yet if the faithful page of time might show
 Recorded truths that made this bosom glow,
 If transiently o'er such my voice hath past,
 They here will speak while life and memory last."

It was perhaps a pity that Woods did not get some one to write an address for him ; however, the above no doubt served his purpose, and it is gratifying to find that he had an overflowing house. "Never," says a contemporary critic,* "was an actor so enthusiastically welcomed on his appearance, and few actors have ever quitted the stage with more universal regret. The plaudits of the audience when he finally retired were quite unprecedented." The sentimental part of Captain Faulkner was well suited to the trying scene he had to go through. He was supported by Young as Tangent, Rock as Toby Allspice, Grant as Caustic, and Miss Duncan as Julia. While delivering his address Woods was frequently interrupted by his feelings, which got the better of him.

Woods' career was almost entirely confined to Edinburgh. According to the only authority to be found,† he made his first appearance on any stage at the Haymarket as Mahomet in 1771.‡ At the close of the same year, he joined the Edinburgh Company, with which he was connected without a break until the present season. From all accounts, he must have been both a capable and a useful actor, while his character was without a blemish, and he was reputed to be of gentlemanly manners and address. He had been an intimate friend of Ferguson, the poet, whom he used to take into the Theatre, and place in a particular seat, before the doors were opened for the public. Ferguson, it is said, applauded in a peculiar manner, his method being to bring his fist down like a hammer on the top of the rail in front of the dress circle. For a few years before his retiring, Woods had, to a large extent, lost the full quality of his voice ; his somewhat timid nature, too, was fully taken advantage of by managers (Jackson in particular) to thrust younger men into his parts, so that he latterly had not been so prominent a member of the company.

Although Jackson had failed in his attempt to thrust Fennell into Woods' place, he very easily managed in 1801-2 to give Grant all the cream of the leading parts, and it was no uncommon thing to see Woods sitting in the gallery, watching Grant blustering through such parts as Joseph Surface.§ Woods was not so popular in 1802 as he had been in 1788. Many of his friends were dead, or had given up going to the

* Candidus.

† Letters of Candidus 1802.

‡ See *ante*, p. 158.

§ Letters of Candidus.

Theatre, while a new generation had sprung up, which, taking him for what he was worth, not knowing or caring about what he *had been*, and finding in his style many flaws which had crept in with years, gave him little support. His benefits for some years past had been very poor, and it was said Jackson had reduced his pay. Upon the whole, the best thing he could do was to retire, and it is pleasing to find that this, his last, benefit brought so large a sum as £212.

Woods advertised that he would direct his entire attention to teaching elocution, and that he could take in a few boarders in his house at No. 14 in the "Terrace." But this programme was altered by the stern decree of death, which fell upon him in the following December.

He was buried in the Calton Burying-ground, where his grave is marked by a headstone.

April 19th seems to have been the last night of playing for the winter season, and the house remained closed until July 5th, when it opened with *Love in a Village*, Young Meadows being played by Kelly from Drury Lane, and Rosetta by Mrs Billington.

On the 13th, H. Johnston appeared as Hamlet, and on the 15th, Dwyer, from Drury Lane, made his first appearance here, acting Belcour in the *West Indian*.

During the season, which lasted until August 2nd, Mrs Powell* appeared in several parts.

The season following (1802-3) did not commence until January 15th, when *Much Ado* was played.

Young, in the leading parts, seems to have made great strides this season, and received very warm encouragement. Miss Duncan had also improved very much. Miss Walstein left during the season, and her parts were indifferently filled, first by a Miss Fitzgerald, and afterwards by Mrs Grant. Toms and Grant shared Woods' parts between them, and Turpin seems to have run Rock pretty closely in the low comedy line.

Mrs Esten proved a great attraction during a short starring engagement; her salary was £50 per night.†

A shop boy of the name of Robertson, the son of a mechanic, made a considerable sensation in the part of Douglas, and after closing the season, on May 3rd, the company went to Glasgow.

Young left when the Edinburgh season closed, and went to Liver-

* Afterwards Mrs Renaud.

† *Monthly Mirror*.

pool,* and a Mr Willoughby, who was well known at the time in Scottish itinerant companies, joined in his stead.

The results of the benefits at the conclusion of the winter season (1802-3) in Edinburgh were as follows:—Rock £145, Mattocks £52, Crumpton £40, Grant £89, Hallion £78, Young £139, Mr and Mrs Lee £29, Mr and Mrs Turpin £102, Mr Bell £78, Miss Duncan £185, Toms £86.†

On 10th May 1803, Charles Dibdin wrote from Drogheda to “Mr Muir, near the Royal Exchange, Edinburgh,” ‡ as follows:—

DEAR SIR,—Not having heard from you at Dublin, whence I wrote to you a week ago, I now send you the copy of a large posting bill and advertisement. I would wish both to contain the same words. Please to insert the place of performance. I hope it will be the Theatre, and that you have been able to procure it upon reasonable terms. You will not forget to take me a lodging.

Sans Souci.

Mr Dibdin respectfully announces to the inhabitants of Edinburgh and the vicinity of that metropolis that he means to perform his various entertainments of Sans Souci at ——— on Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday, the 23rd, 24th, 25th, and 26th of May, 1803. The performances will be *Most Votes*, *The Frisk*, *The Cakehouse* and *Christmas Gambols*, and *Tom Wilkins*, in all which will be introduced considerable variety and a great number of new songs. Further particulars will be given in the handbills.

Yours,

My dear Sir,

Very sincerely,

Drogheda,
May 10th 1803.

C. DIBDIN.

All our compliments.

About this time the matter of Dibdin's pension was mooted, and in his “Public Undeceived” (1807) he, after narrating his unfavourable reception in Ireland, where the rebellion had not quite subsided in the people's minds, and he was considered by the disaffected as a spy of Government, says he returned by way of Portpatrick to Edinburgh, and not finding an expected letter there, “wrote instantly to contradict my different engagements and came post to London.”

From the advertisements in the *Courant*, however, it would appear that Dibdin fulfilled his Edinburgh engagements before travelling south. Mr Muir had succeeded in securing the Theatre for the days named, and the order of the performances was:—Monday 23d, *Most Votes* (first produced in 1802); Tuesday 24th, *The Cakehouse* (1800) and *Christmas Gambols* (1795); Wednesday, *The Frisk* (1801); and Thursday, *Tom*

* He was very successful there. He had two benefits; the first brought him £162, and the second £290.

† *Monthly Mirror*.

‡ In the collection of E. Rimbault Dibdin of Liverpool.

Wilkins (1799). Tickets were to be had of Mr D. Cunningham's Lodgings, 22 Princes Street (where it is probable Dibdin lodged), and the prices of admission were 4s., 3s., 2s., and 1s. This last was a departure, rendered necessary by the use of the Theatre, from Dibdin's usual practice of making one charge for any part of the hall. The advertisement of the last performance states that on this evening "Mr Dibdin will take leave of Edinburgh." He was now nearly sixty years of age, and probably did not visit the city again, although he lived until 1814. No contemporary criticism of Dibdin's performances in Edinburgh is to be found, but his repeated visits suggest the inference that they were well patronised. It is satisfactory to be able to record in the Annals of the Edinburgh Theatre, that it has been the scene of performances by this remarkable man of genius, who, as a national lyric writer, is surpassed only in the English tongue by Burns, and as a melodist, stands in the front rank of English composers.

On July 9th, the summer season opened with *John Bull*, for the first time in Edinburgh, the part of Job Thornberry being played by Bannister, jun., from Drury Lane. The house only remained open until the 25th, after which it remained closed till the opening for the winter season, on December 10th. The loss of Young was severely felt this season, although Willoughby and Faulkner divided his business, the latter taking mostly the tragic lead. He seems to have been a sensible actor, who might have done for second parts, but was quite unfitted for the principal. Willoughby appeared better by contrast in the second parts, and had a fine sonorous voice. Hollingsworth filled Rock's place pretty successfully in low comedy, but was nowhere in Irish parts; while among the ladies of the company, Miss Duncan was perhaps the only one of real merit.* The usual benefits were given, and the following sums drawn:—Miss Duncan† £208, Rock (who joined late in the season) £206, and Turpin £195.

On February 6th, an actor from New York, named Chalmers, appeared as Macbeth, and continued during the season playing leading business, chiefly in comedy. During the same month, the play of *The Soldier's Daughter* was brought out, and ran successfully for twelve nights.

The season closed on May 2nd with Chalmers' benefit, and then the company went to Glasgow.

In the *Courant* of June 28th, 1804, there appears the following announcement:—

* Miss Biggs had also gone to Liverpool.

† She stayed at 5 Shakspeare Square.

"The public are most respectfully informed that the young gentleman who has for some time past performed in the Theatres of Dublin, Cork, and Belfast, with such success as to acquire the appellation of the "Young Roscius," and who has been received with an equal degree of estimation in Glasgow, is engaged to perform for a few nights only, and will make his first appearance on this evening, Thursday, June 28th, when will be performed the tragedy of *Douglas*."

What the merits of this youthful histrion really were, there is no necessity to inquire into here. The *Courant* dismissed the subject in six lines; but in other quarters the performances of the "Young Roscius" called forth a large amount of controversy. Some of the attacks made upon him were as unfair as others were absurdly laudatory. In reply to the former description, Jackson published a pamphlet entitled "Strictures upon the Merits of Young Roscius (1804)," in which he certainly sets up a sensible although partial defence of his extraordinary protege.

Master Betty—for such was the name of the "Young Roscius,"—played a large round of parts during his engagement. On July 14th, Munden, from Covent Garden, made his appearance, and played on alternate evenings with Betty.

The season, after a prosperous run, closed some time in the beginning of August,

On December 5th, 1804, the winter season opened with *The West Indian*. Belcour = Dwyer, from Drury Lane; Stockwell = Eyre, from Bath. During February, Mrs Young, from Drury Lane, appeared, her engagement extending over several weeks, and on March 12th or 13th,* *The Honeymoon* was played for the first time in Edinburgh, the following being the cast:—Duke = Fyre; Rolando = Evatt; Count Montalbin = Flowerdew; Doctor Lampedo = Berry; Jaquez = Turpin; Balthazor = Hollingsworth; Zamora (with song) = Mrs Turpin; Volante = Mrs Evatt; Juliana = Mrs Young.

The Honeymoon was performed some half dozen times during the remainder of the season. On March 30th Mrs Eyre, from Bath, made her first appearance here, playing the Widow Cheerly, in the *Soldier's Daughter*, and the season finished on April 22nd, after which the company journeyed to Glasgow to open the New Theatre Royal there on the 24th, with *The Honeymoon*, and an address specially written for the occasion.

During the summer (1805) Mrs Siddons played some six evenings,

I have been unable to find out which, owing to the wording of the advertisement. It was certainly one or the other.

commencing on June 29th with *The Stranger*, in which she appeared in her fine impersonation of Mrs Haller. After these performances the Theatre appears to have been closed until July 27th, on which date Miss Duncan commenced a starring engagement. During July and August the Misses Adam, dancers, four in number, proved popular, and on August 8th the eldest of the four appeared as Sophia in *The Road to Ruin*.

Immediately afterwards, H. Johnston* appeared, and continued until the close of the season on August 24th, on which evening he took his benefit, playing the Duke in *The Honeymoon*, to Juliana by Mrs Eyre, her first appearance in that character. The proceeds of his benefit were over £200.

The winter season did not open until January 18th 1806, when *School for Friends* was performed. On March 1st, *The Hunter of the Alps* was produced, with the following cast :—Felix = Dwyer ; Juan = Knox ; Florio = Miss E. Jones ; Jeronymo = Berry ; Baptista = Hollingsworth ; Rosalvi = Toms ; Genevieve = Miss Jones ; Helena = Mrs Mason.

The season seems to have been very dreary. The *Monthly Mirror* of May (1806) says :—

“The experience of this and the two or three last seasons ought to convince Mr John Jackson that the tide of popularity, though never in his favour, has *irretrievably* turned against him. It would be ‘kicking against the pricks’ to attempt a renewed management. This season has been peculiarly unfortunate to the receipts of the house, and yet, singular as it may appear, not one of the performers altogether failed in his benefit, though the Courts of Law were up and thousands, of course, out of town ; and though, by some gross mismanagement, the performers were obliged to act every night for the last fortnight of the season and thus risk a total failure (the benefits followed each other nightly). This disposition in the audiences of Edinburgh to patronize individual merit requires no encomium ; it is honourable to themselves, to the performers, and highly creditable to the liberality and taste of their country.

“It may be proper to remark, that the Edinburgh Theatre is usually open on Mondays, Wednesdays, Thursdays, and Saturdays. The strength of each night may thus be estimated : if the aggregate be sixteen, then Saturday may be equal to six and a-half, Wednesday four and a-half, Monday three, Thursday two. In the subjoined list of benefits those falling on a Saturday are marked thus †

Turpin,	<i>John Bull,</i>	£150 0 0
† Dwyer,	<i>Suspicious Husband,</i>	144 0 0
M'Gregor, boxkeeper,	<i>Soldier's Daughter,</i>	155 0 0
Mr and Mrs Evatt,	<i>Cymbeline,</i>	100 11 0
† Toms,	<i>Mountaineers,</i>	115 0 0
Berry,	<i>Secrets Worth Knowing,</i>	100 9 0
† Mr and Mrs Mason,	<i>Provoked Husband,</i>	79 0 0

* Johnston resided at 9 St James Square.

MacGibbon,	<i>Clandestine Marriage,</i>	£57 9 0
Flowerdew,	<i>Battle of Hexham,</i>	55 0 0
Jones and Shaw,	<i>Fashionable Lover,</i>	80 0 0
Mrs Orger,	<i>Heir at Law,</i>	78 0 0

Mrs Orger's benefit was on the last night of the season, May 7th, and a few evenings after Misses Walton and Knox risked a benefit, and got a boy of the name of Wilson, termed the "Caledonian Roscius," to appear as Rolla. "Though," says the *Monthly Mirror*, "it blew one of the most dreadful storms of snow, sleet, &c., seen at this season for many years, the house amounted to £60. The price paid the manager is £42, extra expenses about £3 more, but on the benefit nights, when it is unusual to perform, the expense of the house is only £30."

Several infant prodigies had appeared in Edinburgh during the season; the mania for such sickly performances being at its height, although it very soon afterwards cooled down. It is worth noting, too, that Stephen Kemble made two or three appearances during March; but nothing else of moment was done.

The company, after performing in Glasgow for some time, returned on July 15th (1806), and opened with Miss Smith, from Covent Garden, as Mrs Oakly in the *Jealous Wife*, as the particular attraction. Several of the winter company had left, and altogether the performances must have been poor affairs. The salaries paid by Jackson and Rock, were quite insufficient to secure good actors—or, if they did manage to get hold of one for a while, to keep him. Miss Smith took her benefit on July 31st, in the character of Edgar in the play of that name.

Mr Hill and Miss Atkins, from Covent Garden, followed on August 2nd, for the race week, opening as Young Meadows and Rosetta in *Love in a Village*; their last appearance being as Don Carlos and Clara in *The Duenna* on August 16th.

The winter season opened so early as November 19th (1806) with the *Soldier's Daughter*, and a complete list of the company engaged was advertised in the *Courant*, with the information added, that it was the best company "out of London."

The first item of interest to be found was the production on December 15th of *Valentine and Orson*, when Mrs Nicol appeared as Cicely. This is the first mention of this lady's name in connection with the Edinburgh Theatre, which she adorned for many years.

The company soon after that went to Glasgow, and the Theatre in

Edinburgh remained closed until Saturday 24th January, when it was reopened with the *Belle's Stratagem*. Doricourt = Dwyer; Sir George Touchwood = Toms; Flutter = Evatt; Mountebank = Berry; Hardy = Rock; Mrs Racket = Mrs Johnson; Lady Francis Touchwood = Mrs Orger; Letitia Hardy = Mrs Young.

On the 29th, *Douglas*. Lord Randolph = Evatt; Glenalvon = Meggett; Douglas = Toms; Old Norval = Archer; Lady Randolph = Mrs Johnson.

On February 12th, *Macbeth*. Macbeth = Meggett; Macduff = Toms; Banquo = Evatt; Lady Macbeth = Mrs Johnson.

On April 2nd, *Hamlet*. Hamlet = Meggett; King = Shaw; Polonius = Johnson; Horatio = Evatt; Ghost = Toms; Gravedigger = Rock; Queen = Mrs Johnson; Ophelia = Mrs Young.

The season closed on April 29th, when Mr and Mrs Archer took a benefit, with *Speed the Plough*.

Mr Cooke and Miss Smith were specially engaged for a few nights in July (1807), commencing on the 24th, when Cooke appeared as Richard III.; with the *Waterman* as an afterpiece. Tom Tug = Trueman, from Drury Lane, his first appearance here. On July 25th, *Merchant of Venice*. Shylock = Cooke; Portia = Miss Smith. July 27th, *Othello*. Iago = Cooke; Desdemona = Miss Smith. Miss Smith also recited Collins' "Ode to the Passions."

August 8th was Miss Smith's last night and benefit, for which occasion Sir Walter Scott had written some verses for her to deliver. Owing to some mistake, they reached her too late for the purpose. In the letter accompanying them Scott states that they had been written on the morning of the day on which they had been despatched, and that the idea was, in his estimation, better than the execution. Whether this is the case or not, the verses certainly add another proof of their author's kindly feeling towards the actors, for he expressly states the hope, in his letter, that something from his pen might, perhaps, "add a little salt to the bill." For Miss Smith,* it may be added, he entertained a sincere friendship.

"When the lone pilgrim views afar
The shrine that is his guiding star,
With awe his footsteps print the road
Which the loved saint of yore has trod.

* Afterwards Mrs Bartley. See page 242.

As near he draws, and yet more near,
 His dim eye sparkles with a tear ;
 The Gothic fane's unwonted show,
 The choral hymn, the taper's glow,
 Oppress the soul while they delight,
 And chasten rapture with a fight.
 No longer dare he think his toil
 Can merit aught his patron's smile.
 Too light appears the distant way,
 The chilly eve, the sultry day ;
 All these endured no favour claim,
 But, murmuring forth the sainted name,
 He lays his little offering down,
 And only deprecates a frown.
 We, too, who ply the Thespian art,
 Oft feel such bodings of the heart ;
 And when our utmost powers are strained,
 Dare hardly hope your favour gained.
 She, who from sister climes has sought
 The ancient land where Wallace fought !
 Land long renowned for arms and arts,
 And conquering eyes and dauntless hearts !
 She, as the flutterings here avow,
 Feels all the pilgrim's terrors now ;
 Yet sure on Caledonian plain,
 The stranger never sued in vain,
 'Tis yours, the hospitable task,
 To give the applause, she dare not ask ;
 And they who bid the pilgrim speed,
 The pilgrim's blessing be their meed !"

On August 19th 1807, Mr Bellamy and Mrs Mountain, from Drury Lane, were advertised to open a six nights' engagement, but the lady being ill her appearance was postponed until August 29th, when she played Clara in *The Duenna*. On September 3rd she played Polly in the *Beggars' Opera*, on which occasion Mr Mountain was leader of the band.

On November 24th, what may be termed an autumn season was commenced with the *Way to get Married*. On the 28th, Young, described as from the Theatre Royal, Haymarket—his first appearance here for four years—was advertised to play Hamlet. However, he had got snowed-up on the road, and did not appear till several nights after. On December 3rd he played the Stranger, on the 12th Benedick, with Mrs Young as Beatrice.

The Theatre closed on the 21st, and the company went to Glasgow, returning again and reopening on January 23rd, with *The Merchant of Venice*, the following being the cast :—Shylock = Cooke, from Covent Garden ; Antonio = Archer ; Bassano = Mansel ; Gratiano = Watt ; Lorenzo = Trueman ; Launcelot = Berry ; Portia = Mrs Young ; Nerissa = Mrs W. Penson. On February 13th, *Othello*. Othello = Young ; Iago = Cooke ; Desdemona = Mrs Young. For his benefit Cooke played Joseph Surface in *School for Scandal* on February 20th, with Rock as Sir Peter, Young as Charles Surface, and Mrs Young as Lady Teazle. On the 28th Cooke played for the benefit of the Charity Workhouse, and on the 29th his engagement ended.

On March 3rd, Mrs Siddons commenced an engagement of six nights, which was advertised as her “farewell performances in Scotland.” Her first appearance was as Mrs Haller in *The Stranger*, while, on March 14th, as Mrs Beverley in *The Gamester*, she bade farewell to her Edinburgh friends.* The last night of the season was set apart for the benefit of Mr and Mrs Vining.

The Theatre only remained closed until May 30th, when it re-opened with *The Busybody* and *Ella Rosenberg*, the latter for the first time in Edinburgh, the following being the cast :—Elector = Archer ; Rosenberg = Mansel ; Flutterman = Berry ; Colonel Mountfort = Vining ; Storm = Evatt ; Ella = Mrs Young. This drama became very popular, and was a stock piece for years. On June 25th, Mrs Mountain appeared as Adela, in *The Haunted Tower*. Her engagement ended on July 11th,† and on the 16th, Bannister appeared as Echo in the *World*, acting with great success apparently until August 1st. On August 8th Elliston, of Drury Lane, made his appearance as Rolla in *Pizarro*, and Young Wilding in *The Liar*. August 11th, *Macbeth*. Macbeth = Elliston ; Lady Macbeth = Mrs Powell, her first appearance this season. August 20th, *The Rivals*. Faulkland = Elliston ; Julia = Mrs Powell. August 22nd, *The Honeymoon*, for benefit of Mr Elliston, who played the part of the Duke.

On August 24th, the first appearance in Edinburgh has to be recorded of Mrs Henry Siddons, an actress who, as a woman, was respected throughout her life by the first families in Edinburgh. As an artiste, in her particular line, she was acknowledged to have had few equals and

* This was not her final appearance in Edinburgh.

† She went to Corri's Rooms, and there gave a single-handed entertainment.

no superiors ; and as a manageress, was one of the prime movers in raising the Edinburgh stage to the high moral and artistic tone for which it became famous.

It is to be regretted that no record can be found of the part she first appeared in before the Edinburgh public. On August 25th, however, she played Belvidera in *Venice Preserved*, to the Jaffier of her husband, his first appearance this season, and Pierre by Cooke, who must have returned to Edinburgh to fill another engagement. Mrs Powell still remained in the company, which with so many reinforcements must have been very strong.

On August 29th, *Richard III.* Glo'ster = Cooke ; Richmond = H. Siddons ; Queen = Mrs Powell. September 6th, last night of the season, *Hamlet.* Hamlet = H. Siddons ; Ophelia = Mrs H. Siddons.

An Italian opera company appeared on the evenings of November 12th, 14th, 16th, and 19th, 1808. Among the artistes engaged were Madame Catalani, Signors Siboni, Miarteni, and Spagniolette, and Madame Miarteni. Mr Corri presided at the piano. The prices during this engagement were—boxes, 10s. 6d. ; pit, 6s. ; first gallery, 5s. ; second gallery, 3s.

The dramatic season for 1808-9 began on November 26th with Morton's *Cure for the Heartache.* December 26th, *Plot and Counter Plot*, from the Haymarket, first time here. On December 29th an advertisement appeared in the newspapers intimating "That candidates for the management of the Theatre Royal, Edinburgh, are requested to send their proposals in writing without delay to Mr Home, Signet Office, Solicitor to the Assignees of the Patent." The "grand allegorical pantomime" of *Cinderella* was brought out on January 11th ; and on April 7th another piece of the same kind, with the title of *Red Roy.*

On May 17th, Incledon appeared as Captain Macheath, and on the 18th as Tom Tug. May 31st, Mrs Siddons again appeared, acting on that evening the part of Lady Randolph to Putman's Douglas.


July 3rd, Cooke made his appearance as Glo'ster in *Richard III.* ; and on the 19th played *Cato*, being the first time it had been played here for a great many years. After a visit from Fawcett, the comedian, commencing July 29th, the Theatre closed on August 12th, and remained so closed for nearly three years.

FIFTH PERIOD,

1809 to 1851.

CHAPTER XVI.

THE SIDDONS REIGN.

HE Theatre had now been standing for forty years, during which time, if we leave out of account occasional bright gleams of better things, its history must assuredly be regarded as stale, flat, and unprofitable.

The great influence that Garrick had exercised upon the stage—an influence felt even so far north as Edinburgh—had ceased with his death; Sheridan, although so great an author, left the social, moral, and intellectual status of the profession lower than he had found it; Mrs Siddons was no more than a great actress; but not by any means a vital part of the theatrical organisations of her day. John Kemble alone served as a backbone to the whole concern, strengthening it and giving tone to its reputation during part of the forty years under consideration. In a few years a new light was to burst upon the dramatic firmament, with a glory which was not only dazzling in its brilliancy, but whose influence has permeated through all the ups and downs, revolutions and counter-revolutions, even to this present time. In 1809, however, Kean was but a strolling player, and the Drama sadly lacked intelligent and powerful backing to bring it again into that repute with the public, in which position alone it could prosper in a healthy manner. Whether that support came from within or without really mattered little. In England, it came from within, in the person of Edmund Kean; in Scotland, from without, and Walter Scott was the person who aroused it from lethargy and stagnation. This was not done by any particular word or deed on his part; nor did he, least of all men, know the important change he was steadily working in this direction. Scott was above all things a great leader, and in setting the example of regularly patronising the theatre, he was inevitably followed by the most intelligent of his time.

Scott, however, did even more than this, for it was through his taking an intelligent and catholic interest in the drama, and by setting other men of standing, intelligence, and education to do the same, that in time and by natural means it was cleansed and purged of much of the dross and impurity which had hitherto defiled our local theatrical system.

A complete change of management was necessary in the first place. The sleepy and self-important type which had been inaugurated by Ross was effete; what was wanted in its place was energy combined with intelligence, and, thanks partly to Scott, both qualities were found in the persons of Henry Siddons, his wife, and brother-in-law. Scott's intimacy with, and friendship towards, both Mrs Siddons and her brother, John Kemble, is well known; so it can easily be imagined with what pleasure he viewed and promoted the arrangements which were being made to secure the Edinburgh Theatre for the son of the great actress, with whom he had contracted a considerable friendship in earlier years. It may be mentioned that during this year Scott purchased a share in the theatre, and was made one of the acting trustees for the general body of proprietors. So far as can be ascertained, Siddons was not without a rival in his application for the Patent.

The following letter * contains some information which is now published for the first time:—

“ To Henry Bunbury, Esq.,

“ January 1st 1809.

“ Bury St Edmunds.

“ I received the post, and as far as I have eaten my way into it, pronounce it delicious. . . . I have given up all thoughts of the Edinburgh Theatre. The first condition staggered me, to give up Drury entirely! Edinburgh is a delightful spot—but London has a few charms. Here I know every inch of ground, and barring gout, have a *firm footing*. To sink a large sum on a five years' lease, subject to the control of a committee in the management of the Theatre, were conditions I could not stomach, and I gave it up as cheerfully as I gave into it in the first instance, when no such impediments presented themselves. Those who are well off and wish to be better frequently bother themselves in their calculations, so I shall stick to No. 1, and remain in the old shop.

(Signed) JOHN BANNISTER.”

When Siddons got the Patent, he turned his back upon the old building and transferred the royal sanction to the Circus in Leith Walk. This was the cause of much dispute with the proprietors in Shakspeare Square, who endeavoured, at first by persuasion and afterwards by force, to secure Siddons as their tenant.

* In the collection of J. Mansfield Mackenzie, Esq., W.S.

Both, however, proved unavailing at the time,* and the New Theatre Royal, Leith Walk, was opened under His Majesty's Patent on Tuesday, November 14th 1809, with the Comedy of the *Honeymoon*; the Duke and Juliana by Mr and Mrs Siddons, *Fortune's Frolics* being played as an after piece. The house had been newly decorated, and in readiness for some time. The following accounts of it are taken from the *Monthly Mirror*. First, in the November number it says, "the New Theatre Royal, Edinburgh, is finished. It is in the Gothic style." And then, some months afterwards, the following appears:—

"A house which was formerly the Circus, and subsequently Concert rooms, has been fitted up with tolerable neatness, although somewhat in the *gingerbread-work* style, and the access to which is excessively bad, for you must make the complete circle of the house, and ascend one or two flights of steps before you arrive at the box lobby. The interior, however, is executed with considerable taste, is well lighted, the scenery and machinery very good, and the music, which was formerly execrable, very much improved."

In the advertisement announcing the opening of the house, precise directions are given regarding the order for coaches drawing up. "It is further requested," the intimation concludes, "that no carriage will come by St James Square, that road being reserved for chairs." The columns of the *Courant* contain the following account of the opening:—

"On Tuesday night the new Theatre opened under the management of Mr Siddons. The house, in a few minutes after opening, overflowed in every part. Public expectation had been greatly raised by the reported elegance and accommodation of the Theatre, and it was almost taken for granted that the union of Mr Nasmyth's talents in design, and Mr Williams' † in execution, could scarcely fail of producing a happy and successful effect. The Theatre is indeed very beautiful and extremely commodious, yet we are compelled to admit that the Gothic effect of the ornaments excites rather a sombre than a cheerful impression, and that this effect was aided last night by a deficiency of light everywhere except on the stage, and particularly in the back part of the boxes. The accommodation of the house in other respects seems complete. The stage is lighted in a novel and perfectly effective manner, and the scenery is equal in beauty and design and execution to any we have witnessed.

"Before the play, an overture, arranged for the occasion, was performed, and we noticed in it a hautboy touched by the hand of a master."

Mr and Mrs H. Siddons' performance is then criticised at length, and it continues—

"They both experienced the welcome they deserve, and we have little doubt that the flattering nature of this, their first reception in a new capacity, and in a strange land, will lead them

* Regarding this subject much interesting matter will be found in Murray's Address, 1815, p. 270.

† Mechanist and painter, from London.

to feel that they have made their adoption where their patrons are equally able to appreciate merit and reward it. Mr Siddons' Duke was chastely, naturally, and feelingly portrayed. He could not perhaps have chosen his *debut* more happily. Mrs Siddons' Juliana, in the passages where tenderness is required, could scarcely be rivalled; there the *naïveté* and the indescribably fascinating charm of her manner made their full impression."

It was natural that, having made a successful opening, Siddons should desire to keep things going briskly during the season. The engagement of his mother and uncle soon suggested itself, and he thought it would be an excellent idea to have them perform together. The attraction would undoubtedly have proved enormous; so he wrote them both for terms, mentioning a date, but not informing them of his project—that was to be a pleasant surprise for them when they met in Edinburgh. In course of post he received his replies. Mrs Siddons stated that she would be content with "half the receipts and a free benefit;" while Kemble said that if he got a "free benefit in addition to half the house," he would be glad to appear! They were both engaged, but *not* for the same date. The first production of importance this season was *The Foundling of the Forest*,* on Wednesday, November 29th, when the part of Bertrand was taken by Terry, his first appearance here. It was this individual who, with one or two other intimate friends, shared Scott's great secret of the authorship of the *Waverley Novels*, and who became so intimately associated with the production of the dramas from these immortal works. Terry, who came from Liverpool to fulfil this engagement, was spoken of in the *Courant* of December 4th as follows:—

"Mr Terry's figure, though not cast in the mould of heroes, is well formed and graceful; his countenance is powerfully expressive, and his voice, though not melodious, is strong, full, and clear. With these natural endowments, he appears to combine a perfect knowledge of the stage, great energy and propriety of action and deportment, a vigorous judgment, and an active mind."

The remainder of the cast was as follows:—Count de Valmont = Siddons; Florian = Kent; Baron Longueville = Thomson; Gaspard = Kelly; Sanguine = W. Murray; Lenoir = Mason; Geraldine = Miss Vining; Rosabella = Mrs W. Penson; Monica = Mrs Nicol; The Unknown Female = Mrs H. Siddons.

The first appearance of Mr W. Murray, on November 20th, as Count Cassel in *Lovers' Vows*, must not be passed over. His connection with

* Was produced under the care of William Murray. The play is heavy in the extreme, but was acted five nights in succession, and afterwards for other five.

the Edinburgh stage was probably of more importance to it than that of any other man who ever lived.

On December 12th, *A Winter's Tale* was produced, with scenery by Nasmyth. Siddons played Leonatus; Terry, Antigonus; Mrs Young, Hermione; and Mrs H. Siddons, Paulina.

On the 20th, *Adelgitha*, a drama originally produced at Drury Lane in 1807, was played in Edinburgh for the first time, and on the 28th, *Mary Queen of Scots* was brought forward.

Murray's name is first mentioned as stage manager on January 8th 1810, when *The Tempest* was produced under his direction. Terry was the Prospero; Stephano = Kelly; Ferdinand = Putman; and Miranda = Mrs Vining.

Stephen Kemble, in passing through the town, played three nights, commencing January 23rd—how he was received has not been recorded.

We now come to the production of Joanna Baillie's *Family Legend* (on January 29th 1810), in which Scott took so warm an interest, and we cannot do better than quote at length from two letters of his to the authoress. The first is dated October 27th 1809—

“On receiving your long kind letter yesterday, I sought out Siddons, who was equally surprised and delighted at your liberal arrangement about the *Lady of the Rock*. I will put all the names to rights, and retain enough of locality and personality to please the antiquary, without the least risk of bringing the Clan Gillian about your ears. I went through the Theatre, which is the most complete little thing of the kind I ever saw, elegantly fitted up, and large enough for every purpose. I trust with you, that in this as in other cases our Scotch poverty may be a counterbalance to our Scotch pride, and that we shall not need in any time a larger or more expensive building. Siddons himself observes, that even for the purposes of show (so paramount now-a-days) a moderate stage is better fitted than a large one, because the machinery is pliable and manageable in proportion to its size. With regard to the equipment of the *Family Legend*, I have been much diverted by a discovery I have made. I had occasion to visit our Lord Provost (by profession a stocking weaver), and was surprised to find the worthy magistrate filled with a newborn zeal for the Drama. He spoke of Mr Siddons' merits with enthusiasm, and of Miss Baillie's powers almost with tears of rapture. Being a curious investigator of cause and effect, I never rested until I found out that this Theatre rage which had seized his lordship of a sudden was owing to a large order for hose, pantaloons, and plaids, for equipping the rival clans of Campbell and Maclean, and which Siddons was sensible enough to send to the warehouse of our excellent provost.*

The next letter speaks of the production :—

“To Miss Joanna Baillie, Hampstead.

January 30th, 1810.

“My Dear Miss Baillie,—You have only to imagine all that you could wish to give

* William Coulter.

success to a play, and your conceptions will still fall short of the complete and decided triumph of the *Family Legend*. The house was crowded to a most extravagant degree ; many people had come from your native capital of the West : everything that pretended to distinction, whether from rank or literature, was in the boxes, and in the pit such an aggregate mass of humanity as I have seldom if ever witnessed in the same space. It was quite obvious from the beginning, that the cause was to be very fairly tried before the public, and that if anything went wrong no effort, even of your numerous and zealous friends, could have had much influence in guiding or restraining the general feeling. Some good-natured persons had been kind enough to propagate reports of a strong opposition, which, though I considered them as totally groundless, did not by any means lessen the extreme anxiety with which I waited the rise of the curtain. But in a short time I saw there was no ground whatever for apprehension, and yet I sat the whole time shaking for fear a scene shifter, or a carpenter, or some of the subaltern actors should make some blunder. The scene on the rock struck the utmost possible effect into the audience, and you heard nothing but sobs on all sides. The banquet scene was equally impressive, and so was the combat. Siddons announced the play *for the rest of the week*, which was received not only with a thunder of applause, but with cheering and throwing up of hats and handkerchiefs. Mrs Siddons supported her part incomparably, Siddons himself played Lorn very well indeed, and moved and looked with great spirit. A Mr Terry, who promises to be a fine performer, went through the part of the Old Earl with great taste and effect."

The remainder of the letter is too long for insertion ; however, Scott, after praising the acting of the minor parts, takes Miss Baillie to task for being too democratic in giving the underlings fine sentiments and speeches. The piece ran for fourteen consecutive evenings. The Prologue was from Scott's prolific pen, and spoken by Terry ; the Epilogue by Henry Mackenzie, spoken by Mrs H. Siddons. Soon afterwards a play entitled, *The Friend of the Family*, from the pen of the manager, was produced with considerable success. "Dramaticus," writing in the *Monthly Mirror*, speaks very highly of this piece, and says it was received with much greater testimonies of approbation than was the *Family Legend*. Scott makes the following remarks on it in a letter (March 18th 1810) to Miss Baillie :—*

"Siddons' play was truly flat, but not unprofitable ; he contrived to get it well propped in the acting—though it was such a thing as if you or I had written it would have been damned seventy-fold—yet it went through with applause."

It was produced on the 24th February 1810, the new Prologue spoken by Putman, Epilogue by Mrs Young, and played eight nights ; and again on the 17th March, when it was put on instead of *King John*, which had been withdrawn owing to Mrs Siddons' sudden illness.

* Scott evidently did not see the first production of this, but a performance of it on March 17th, when it was put on instead of *King John*, Mrs Siddons being ill and not able to play.

That lady, the great, the incomparable Mrs Siddons, who, twenty-six years previously, had caused such extraordinary excitement in Edinburgh by her performances, again visited Edinburgh this season. On the evening of Wednesday, March 14th 1810, she opened as Lady Macbeth; afterwards playing in the *Mourning Bride* (March 15th), and repeating *Macbeth* on the 16th. Scott must have been present at one of these three performances, for in a letter to Miss Baillie, already quoted in part above, he remarked on Mrs Siddons' appearance, that he was "quite shocked to see her, for the last two years have made a dreadful inroad both in voice and person." This is so far qualified by the addition that "she has, however, a very bad cold." That was quite true, and in consequence she did not re-appear till March 24th. Sir Walter's strain of criticism was not shared by any of the contemporary critics, who, one and all, were enthusiastic in her praises and the wonderful preservation of her pristine vigour. Speaking of this visit, Chambers, in one of his interesting but unreliable works,* speaks of her "still appearing in the eyes of our fathers the female Milton of the stage, as she had done twenty-six years before in the eyes of their fathers."

Her benefit and last appearance was on Tuesday, 10th April, when she appeared as Belvidera in *Venice Preserved*. Soon after that the famous and unhappy Mrs Jordan appeared for a few nights; her final performance being on June 20th, when she gave her inimitable rendering of the part of Lady Teazle. She did not again visit Edinburgh. Up to this time John, or "Irish," Johnstone as he was familiarly called, had never appeared here. Seeing that he had maintained a monopoly of Irish parts for twenty-seven years in London, and was exceedingly popular all over England, and, of course, in Ireland, it seems astonishing that none of our managers had ever got him "up North." Siddons was enterprising enough to do this, and Johnstone made his first bow to a Scotch audience on June 30th, in the *West Indian*. He finished his engagement on Saturday, July 21st, and came through from Glasgow for one night to act with the celebrated John Emery, on July 28th in the *Review*, he playing Looney, and Emery John "Lump," both their original parts. The Theatre closed on August 6th.

Still abiding in the *New Theatre*, although the bills are merely headed "Theatre Royal," Siddons opened his second season on November 17th

* Written in 1859.

with the *Clandestine Marriage*; the house being "entirely repainted and decorated." A new drop scene, by J. F. Williams, representing St Bernard's Well, was added to the theatre.

On November 22nd Terry played the part of Falstaff in *Henry IV.* for the first time; and on December 15th, the great tenor Braham made his first bow to an Edinburgh audience, appearing in the *Siege of Belgrade*.

It is curious to note that even at this time the management found it necessary to print an announcement on the playbills, that no gentlemen would be admitted behind the scenes. Perhaps this was a special precaution taken to save any obstruction to the elaborate scenery, &c. which was prepared for the production of Sir Walter Scott's *Lady of the Lake* on January 15th 1811. The scenery was announced as being prepared from views taken on the spot,* and the play as having never been played on any stage. This is quite true as regards this particular version, which was written for Edinburgh by Edmund John Eyre, at the request of H. Siddons.† Eyre's play is long and heavy in the extreme, with Scott's language and peculiar metre sliced up into an extraordinary kind of blank verse, and in no respect compares favourably with Tom Dibdin's version, which was very soon after this played in Edinburgh instead of Eyre's.

Scott, in writing to his friend Miss Baillie, speaks of this production:—

"Meanwhile *The Lady of the Lake* is likely to come to preferment in an unexpected manner, for two persons of no less eminence than Messrs Martin and Reynolds, play-carpenters in ordinary to Covent Garden, are employed in scrubbing, careening, and cutting her down into one of those new-fashioned sloops called a melodrama, and my friend Mr H. Siddons is at work on the same job here."

A special overture was written by J. Jones, and the piece was produced under the direction of W. Murray; but although no expense had been spared, and a long time was spent on getting it up, the *Lady of the Lake* was only played about six times throughout the season. The cast was as follows:—Fitzjames = Siddons; John of Brent (with song, "A Fig for the Vicar") = Turpin; James, Earl of Douglas = Archer; Allan Bane = Shaw; Malcolm Graeme = Thomson; Lady Ellen Douglas = Mrs H. Siddons; Roderick Dhu = Terry; Red Murdoch = W. Murray; Brian = Halliwell; Lady Margaret = Mrs M'Namara; Blanche of Devon = Mrs Young.

On February 2nd Bannister appeared as Colonel Feignwell in *A*

* By J. F. Williams.

† See preface of edition printed in London, 1811.

Bold Stroke for a Wife, and played several of his best parts on the succeeding evenings, taking his benefit on the 18th, two nights after which the melodrama of *Tekeli* was brought out; and on March 6th Terry played Polonius to Siddons' Hamlet. Bannister reappeared on March 11th, when he "opened his Budget of an Actor's Ways and Means," an entertainment written expressly for him by Messrs Colman, Dibdin, &c.

On March 18th Siddons brought out another version of the *Lady of the Lake*, by the elder Morton, under the title of *The Knight of Snowdown*. The music, which was by Bishop, included the famous "Tramp" Chorus; but the piece never became popular. The cast was much the same as in Eyre's version, the only changes of importance being that Mrs Young took Mrs Siddons' place as Lady Douglas, and Shaw, Murray's part of the Red Murdoch.

Terry took his benefit, and played Falstaff in the *Merry Wives*, for the first time, on March 23rd; a benefit was given to the theatre band on April 4th; and on the 6th Dowton from Drury Lane appeared, playing Sir Anthony Absolute to Miss Morton's Lydia.

The well-known hautboy player Fraser had a benefit on May 4th, when he played on "that delightful instrument," the patent double flageolet; and the theatre closed on May 8th, to reopen for the summer or after-season on June 22nd, when W. J. Johnstone appeared; followed on July 8th by Miss Duncan from Drury Lane, and on July 22nd by John Kemble. The last night, August 7th, was set apart as a benefit for persons confined for small debts in the city. This was the last performance that Siddons gave in the new Theatre Royal; before again opening, he had removed to Shakespere Square,* where the first performance for the following season was announced for November 16th 1811, and the playbills issued. Mrs Berry not having arrived, however, the opening was postponed until the following Monday, the 18th, when the *Clandestine Marriage* was played, with Terry as Lord Ogleby and Miss Norton as Fanny.

On December 28th Mr Pope appeared, and two nights after the *Caravan; or, the Driver and his Dog Carlo*, announced as the most successful piece ever known, was produced, and ran five nights. In this piece a sheet of real water was advertised, along with a real cascade, and yet it did not draw! Theatrical enterprise was not rewarded then as it came to be in a few years.

* Murray's Address, 1815, p. 270.

Mrs Siddons again appeared this year, announcing her performances as of a farewell nature. On February 22nd she played Lady Macbeth; March 9th, Mary Queen of Scots; Hermione and Mrs Beverley on the 10th and 11th, for the "last time on any stage;" and took her benefit on the 13th, as Queen Katherine in *Henry VIII.*, when she spoke a farewell address.

The famous comedian, Munden, came for a few nights, commencing March 18th, and on April 4th the great Charles Mathews, who related his first impressions to his wife in a letter from which the following is an extract :—*

"Edinburgh turned out as delightful as Glasgow was horrible. Beautiful weather, good society—had the good luck to see the superfine patterns of the Scotch; and the warmest reception I ever met with, because I have considered an Edinburgh audience so difficult to please. Harry † says I am the greatest card he ever had. Hundreds turned away at my benefit. I reckon Edinburgh an annuity to me for the future."

After being closed for ten days, the Theatre reopened on May 16th, when the celebrated Miss Smith, Scott's particular favourite, appeared, along with Jones from the Haymarket. The Theatre was again closed from June 27th to July 27th, when it opened with John Kemble as Hamlet, to close finally for the season on August 10th.

The *Clandestine Marriage* was announced for the opening of the following season on November 14th, but Terry being ill the *Honeymoon* was played instead. An interesting account of this performance is given in the columns of the *Theatrical Inquisitor*, from which the following is an extract :—

"Rolando was performed by Mr Jones in a very respectable manner; but I am sorry I must repeat, that one great fault in the performance of this gentleman, is the want of proper animation. He might easily attain this, however, by perseverance, a greater degree of confidence on his part, and more encouragement on the part of his audience."

"Mr W. Murray as Jaquez afforded great amusement."

"Juliana was performed by Miss Phillips, being her first appearance in this city. Every indulgence ought to be shown to those who make a first appearance before an audience; but I am inclined to suppose she is by no means an eminent actress."

The *Honeymoon* was followed by the farce *Trial by Jury*, and two nights later Mr Grant made his first appearance for seven years, playing Sir Pertinax in the *Man of the World*.

Terry reappeared on the 23rd, and on the following evening he played the part of Shylock for the first time.

* Memoirs, vol. ii. p. 213.

† Henry Siddons.

Catalani, the great vocalist, sang on several evenings during December, and towards the end of the month appeared at four concerts in the Assembly Rooms under Corri's management.

Caledonia, or The Thistle and the Rose, a three-act historical play, with Scots music, was played for the first time on any stage on December 23rd, with the following cast :—Highland Baron = Archer ; Lord Archibald = Terry ; Rosa = Mrs W. Penson ; Matilda = Mrs H. Siddons. *English Party* : Lord de Warrenne = Jones ; De Clifford = Mann. *Mountain Warriors* : Unknown Soldier = Siddons ; Græme = M'Namara ; Colin = Russell ; Dundore = Duff ; etc. Whatever its merits may have been, it only ran for five nights.

A Pantomime called the *White Cat*, was mounted on the 26th January, with M'Namara as Pantaloon, Parker as Harlequin, Duff as Clown, and Miss Stamford as Columbine. John Kemble commenced a seven weeks' engagement on February 2nd, playing Wolsey in *Henry VIII.*, for the first time in Edinburgh on the 4th, and Old Norval on the 12th, to his nephew's Douglas.

Another national tragedy called the *Heiress of Strathearn*, was brought out on March 24th, for the first time on any stage ; but like most productions during this period, did not draw.

Theatrical matters were not in a healthy state by any means, and poor Siddons must have had many a hard fight to keep things going, far more to maintain the high standard of excellence which he had set himself, and which he managed somehow to sustain creditably. The Theatre, too, was small, and at the prices, 4s. for boxes, 3s. for pit, and 2s. and 1s. for the galleries, could not hold £200. The Glasgow Theatre was considerably larger, "yet in spite of all this," says a writer in the *Theatrical Inquisitor*, "and the high literary and dramatic character which Edinburgh has so long held, it is very doubtful whether a larger theatre would prove an advantage." The same writer states that the smallness of the house was only felt when some great performer appears for a few nights, or some very attractive new piece is produced.

The season ended on May 5th, and the Theatre remained closed until July 17th, when Sinclair and Mrs Bishop, the vocalists, made their appearance in the *Duenna*. Two nights later Miss Booth appeared as Juliet, and on August 2nd, for her benefit, she played the part of Douglas. Matthews appeared on August 14th, and the summer season closed on the first of the following month.

The proceedings of the following season (1813-14) are of very little interest. After the opening on November 20th, there fall to be recorded Miss L. Kelly's (Drury Lane) first appearance on November 22nd; Mr Betty's performance of Douglas on the 24th; the production of the *Royal Oak*, by the author of the *Foundling of the Forest*, music by M. Kelly, on December 1st; Mrs C. Kemble's appearance on January 1st (1814); a melo-dramatic spectacle entitled, *Aladdin*, with scenery by Nasmyth and Whitmore, of Covent Garden—which actually ran for twenty-four nights—on January 19th; and C. Kemble's first appearance for fifteen years, on January 24th.

Another melo-dramatic spectacle, the famous *The Miller and his Men*, with music by Bishop, was brought out on February 21st, but was only played five times, and after visits from John Kemble and Mathews, the season closed on May 27th.

Some interesting opinions were given in the March number of the *Theatrical Inquisitor*, regarding the members of the company this season. Mrs W. Penson, it says, acted a chattering lady's maid to perfection, although, in consequence of her having a large family, she did not appear very often. She was a great favourite with the frequenters of the gallery, who adored her acting. Mrs Nicol was the only one in the company capable of acting stiff aged matrons; Mr Russell, who had made great strides in his profession, out-Mathewed Mathews in many of that comedian's parts, while his imitations were given with more spirit. Mason was splendid in farce, or where facial grimaces could be used; Madame Catalani on one occasion was unable to contain her laughter while playing with him. Murray had improved greatly since coming to Scotland, and his taste in getting up spectacles, &c., was excellent. Siddons was sensible in his acting, but his looks and voice were greatly against him. Jones was a handsome young man, good in genteel comedy, and Trueman was only decent as a singer.

Such was, most likely, a pretty fair estimate of the qualities of these performers, who constituted the best talent then on the Edinburgh stage.

About this time (April 1814) a report was current in theatrical circles that, on account of ill-health, Siddons contemplated retiring altogether from management, and perhaps from the stage. As to a successor, various names were mentioned; C. Kemble and John Kemble, however, were generally looked upon as the likely ones. It is quite possible that some

such transfer of the Patent and the Theatre may have been thought of ; but it came to nothing, and Siddons remained in harness to the end—and then, as if it had only awaited such an event, bad fortune rolled away like thunder clouds after a storm, and the warm glow of success shone steadily on the Edinburgh Theatre for many, many years.

In the mean time, the after season commenced with *Hamlet*, on July 25th, Young playing the principal part ; Laertes = Lacy, his first appearance here ; Polonius = Chippendale, his first appearance here. This was the father of the well-known comedian who died January 3rd 1888 (born 1801). Chippendale junior came to Edinburgh with his father and joined the High School ; after which, probably through the influence of Sir Walter Scott, he was placed with the Ballantynes to learn printing, and boasted in after life that he had had the “copy” of some of the novels through his hands.

Another interesting first appearance was that of Miss Stephens on August 11th as Polly in the *Beggars' Opera*.

On the 27th a concert of sacred music was given in the Theatre, at which Miss Stephens sang and Mr Mather presided at the pianoforte. The season closed on September 2nd.

About this time the Drury Lane management made Mrs H. Siddons an offer to play Juliet to Kean's Romeo ;* she, however, declined, and remained with her husband, who opened the next season (1814-15) with *Pizarro* on November 8th, himself playing Rolla. On December 3rd Siddons' play of *Friend of the Family* was reproduced under the new name of *Policy ; or, Thus Runs the World Away* ; it was only played twice, however. On the 13th a benefit was given for the subscription for raising a national monument to the memory of “Mr” R. Burns, the poet ; and on the 26th a pantomime was brought out, with Edwards as clown. A piece by a “gentleman of this city,” called *Lawyers and their Clients*, first saw the light of the stage on January 4th, and ran for eight nights ; the only good part seems to have been that of a conceited fop, played by Murray.†

The *Comedy of Errors*, for the “first time for 30 years,” on February 18th, with Murray and Russell as the two Dromios ; played several times.

On March 1st Mrs H. Siddons had her benefit, when the *Wild Indian Girl* was played, with Henry Siddons as Captain Downright ; it proved

* *Theatrical Inquisitor*.

† *Ibid.*

his last appearance on any stage save that of the world, which he quitted in a very few weeks afterwards. An engagement by John Kemble followed on March 2nd, and Fawcett appeared as Dr Pangloss, Job Thornberry, in *John Bull*, and others of his original parts during the month; on the 29th of which Russell, the low comedian, played Richard III. for his own benefit, and seems to have made a most ridiculous exhibition of himself.

Poor Siddons died on the 12th of April,* leaving his affairs in a somewhat unhappy state, regarding which the following statement was soon afterwards published by Murray :—

“Called on to assist my sister, Mrs Henry Siddons, in the management of the Theatre Royal of this city, rendered vacant by the unfortunate death of Mr Siddons, I feel myself compelled to make an appeal to the public of this metropolis, on the part of my late brother’s family, before I proceed to the discharge of those duties, for the successful issue of which I trust to the candour and liberality of the Edinburgh audience.

“When Mr Siddons first entered upon the management, the expenses of converting Corri’s Rooms into a theatre cost him between four and five thousand pounds. In that theatre he only remained two years, when circumstances rendered it necessary for him to conclude a bargain for the old theatre in Shakspeare Square, by which he became bound to pay two thousand guineas yearly, for twenty-one years, as the value of the property. This obligation commenced, not at the time he took possession, but from the date of the patent. Thus had Mr Siddons to pay 6000 guineas for the old theatre during the time he was paying a rent of £800 per annum for Corri’s Rooms, which he was bound to retain for three years. He had also to pay £1500 for restoring the old theatre, and £500 for reconverting Corri’s Rooms into a concert room.

“Thus the burdens which Mr Siddons incurred stand as follows :—

Converting Corri’s Rooms into a Theatre	£4,000
Rent of Corri’s Rooms for 3 years	2,400
Six years’ rent for old Theatre	12,600
Repairs	1,500
Reconverting Corri’s Rooms	500
	<hr/>
	£21,000

“In the attempt to discharge which Mr Siddons sacrificed all his private property as well as money left him by his father; and he had to borrow £1000, and one year’s rent was allowed to stand over until the expiry of the patent.

“From this it appears that the management will begin in November next with a debt of £3100. The taxes of the theatre are nearly £200; the expenses of performers, carpenters, coals, candles, tradesmen’s bills, &c., about £160 per week in addition to the rent; so that, allowing the theatre to be open thirty weeks in the year (the general length of the season), there is thus established a weekly expenditure of £230. . . .

* For short Biography, see Appendix.

“The difficulty of my task still remains, and it is with extreme anxiety that I request the public of Edinburgh to permit the addition of *one shilling* on the price of the boxes . . . which is the amount charged in Liverpool, Manchester, &c. . . .”

The Theatre was closed for several nights after the death of Siddons, and then reopened under Murray's management. There is no doubt that the new manager had cause to look gloomily on the future; for, as things then stood, ultimate success was very doubtful. Had Siddons lived, it is questionable if he could have long retained the Theatre; his management, although excellent, was not characterised by the shrewdness that Murray always showed, and the long spell of good fortune that was at this moment on the eve of commencement might never have dawned for Siddons as it did for Murray.

The success of the Theatre seemed to date from Siddons' death, which event directly gave it the first impetus. When Murray published the above statement, the Edinburgh public awoke to the facts that they had just lost an excellent manager, one who had willingly sacrificed health, fortune, and even life, to make the Theatre a success, and that the reward they had given him for labouring so well for their entertainment had been only neglect and indifference. Siddons' successor had now spoken in words that were unmistakable—he and his sister would continue the good work that Siddons had commenced; but, there was a condition, they must be better supported, and in the mean time a small tax would be put upon the box frequenters, to compensate for their neglect in the past, and to pay up arrears that had been incurred.

That the sympathy felt for Mrs Siddons was genuine as well as widespread was sufficiently testified by the benefit given her on May 1st, the day that had been originally fixed for Siddons' own benefit. The house was literally packed, and the receipts amounted to £420—the largest sum the Theatre ever held. *Time's a Tell-Tale*, by Siddons, was acted, and the first blink of approaching sunshine seemed to smile upon the Theatre.

The season closed on May 20th, and Murray most liberally set apart that night as a benefit to Moss, the comedian, who had been in his day so long connected with the Edinburgh Theatre, but who was by this time a confirmed invalid in the City Hospital.*

On this occasion Murray delivered the first of the many similar

* *Theatrical Inquisitor.*

addresses with which his name is always associated, and which, from first to last, are models of style. On this occasion, after thanking the audience for their support, he alluded to the report which was current, that the management intended to produce plays in a less expensive and complete manner than formerly, so as to save money in order to clear off the debts on the concern. To this, he replied—"Let our exertions be made, then let them be judged. It is true this concern labours under many heavy difficulties; but what hope have we of surmounting these difficulties, but by endeavouring in every way to meet the wishes of the public?" a reply which was greeted with loud applause.

The after season opened on July 22nd, when Mr J. Johnstone commenced an engagement of six nights in his celebrated character of Major O'Flaherty. The rise of one shilling on the admission to the boxes also took place on that evening, without any opposition.

On August 4th Miss O'Neill made her first appearance on the Edinburgh boards, playing Belvidera in *Venice Preserved*. Pierre = Putman, his second appearance here, and Jaffer = Abbott.

On the following evening she played Mrs Haller in *The Stranger*, and most of her other famous impersonations followed. In all that she did she excited the very highest degree of interest and applause, and firmly established her name as a great actress. The theatrical mania seems during her engagement to have reached a height never experienced before, save when Mrs Siddons appeared in 1784. Not only was the Theatre nightly crowded to excess, but the doors were besieged throughout the best part of the night by servants, waiting for the earliest opportunity of obtaining tickets and places in the boxes.

Sinclair the tenor appeared on the 21st, but played on that and the following nights to thin houses; and the short season closed on the 30th, when Murray, in a few words, thanked the audience both for himself and Mr Sinclair, who wanted, he said, "to express his grateful acknowledgments for the honour they had that night conferred upon him, an honour rendered doubly dear by proceeding from his native city." This was possibly a sarcastic allusion to the bad audiences he had had. During the interval between this and the opening of the winter season (1815-16), considerable alterations were made in the interior of the theatre; the roof was raised, and the upper row of boxes enlarged and rendered more commodious.

The opening night (November 18th) was eagerly looked forward to,

for the great Mrs Siddons was announced to appear for a few evenings for the benefit of her grandchildren. After her previous retirement, it was a venturous undertaking to appear again in public ; but she acquitted herself splendidly, showing scarcely any falling off in her powers, and, considering her advanced time of life, the manner in which she sustained the most exacting characters, proved her genius to be undimmed. Her figure, it was said, was considerably improved since her retirement, being less *enbonpoint* than on her previous appearances, and the energy of her mind seemed unimpaired.

Her first appearance was as Lady Macbeth ; Macbeth being played by Terry, who, by the permission of the proprietors of Covent Garden, was allowed to support Mrs Siddons. Fleance by Miss J. Nicol.

Mrs Siddons' second appearance (November 20th) was in *Douglas*, in which Jones, who had been re-engaged, appeared as Young Norval, and Terry as the Stranger.* On the following evening (November 21st) *Henry VIII.*—Wolsey = Terry ; Henry VIII. = Eyre ; Cromwell = Murray ; and Katherine = Mrs Siddons. *Macbeth* on the 22nd ; *Henry VIII.* repeated on the 23rd ; *King John* on the 25th, with Lady Constance = Mrs Siddons ; *Douglas* on the 27th ; *Earl of Warwick* on the 28th and 29th ; and *The Gamester* on the 30th, being for the benefit of Mrs Siddons, and “last appearance on the stage.”

On January 6th Mrs H. Siddons made her first appearance for the season, playing Viola in *Twelfth Night*, a performance which was characterised by a contemporary critic† as “a sweet piece of acting.” Her strong likeness to her brother (who played Sebastian) enhanced the effect of the performance. This was Mrs H. Siddons' first appearance since the death of her husband, and it is reported that her emotion was very great at first ; but the enthusiasm of the audience knew no bounds, and by hurrying on with her part she managed to stifle her feelings. On January 8th she played Juliet to Putman's Romeo ; on the 29th a melodrama called the *Magpie and the Maid* was given for the first time in Edinburgh, and it was played twenty-three times during the season. On March 16th John Kemble appeared, and played until April 6th, on which night he took his benefit, playing *King Lear*.

Charles Mathews records‡ that coming to Edinburgh this spring he caught cold, and had to lie up several days, during which the Theatre was closed. Be this as it may, the playbills announcing his appearance

* So it is named in the bills.

† *Theatrical Inquisitor*.

‡ *Memoirs*, vol. ii., p. 389.

on April 8th are still extant ; it is quite possible, however, that he did not appear. Mathews further records that his worst house amounted to £103, and on April 18th he had £120. The weather at the time was terribly stormy and cold, and many of the company had to knock off work.

Inclendon appeared on the 22nd April, and on the next evening he was announced as appearing for the "last time in this Theatre." As a matter of fact he again appeared on the same stage on May 3rd, in a miscellaneous performance called the *Minstrels*, when he took his final leave of the audience, it being his last appearance in Edinburgh.

Eyre died during this season, and his widow had a well attended benefit on April 24th. On May 15th Mr and Mrs Berry were given a benefit, chiefly out of charity, so as to give Berry another trial. He had been a good actor, but had been dismissed for drinking, and for some time had led a strolling life ; he had, however, promised to reform, and Murray gave him another chance.

Jones had a miserable house for his benefit, so Murray set apart the last night of the season (June 5th) for him, when he appears to have had better luck.

The summer season opened on July 6th, with Mrs C. Kemble in the Company ; Miss Stephens joined on July 22nd, and Sinclair on the 29th ; Miss O'Neill played from August 5th to the 23rd, after which the Theatre was again closed. Her performances were as popular as before, but on this occasion provoked a good deal of comparison with those of Mrs Siddons. In the part of Mrs Beverley, she was said, by one critic,* not to compare with the older lady. Abbott supported her during the engagement.

The Theatre remained closed until October 7th, when it reopened with Kean as Richard III. He at once electrified the playgoers of Edinburgh, as he had done those of London, with his vivid action and extraordinary originality. Notwithstanding his great success, however, his novel method of acting called forth a good deal of adverse criticism.

Coleridge, it is well known, said that "seeing Kean act was like reading Shakspeare by flashes of lightning." A remark not at all unlike this in spirit, was made by a critic who styled himself "Mr Pitt,"† namely, that "Mr Kean's acting in general pleases less than it astonishes."

Kean's other characters were as follows :—October 8th, Shylock to

* *Theatrical Inquisitor*.

† *Thestian Critique*, 1816.

Mrs H. Siddons' Portia; October 9th, Sir Giles Overreach; October 10th, Othello,—Iago = Trueman; October 12th, benefit and last night, Hamlet.

The following winter season (1816-17) opened with a performance of *The Iron Chest* on November 23rd. Sir Edward Mortimer by Meggett, from Haymarket, "his first appearance here for nine years." Rawbold by Mr Richardson, from English Opera House, his first appearance here.

December 3rd, *The Portfolio*, drama in three acts, for the first time here, and on the 16th, *Hamlet*; Hamlet by a gentleman, his first appearance on any stage. On this occasion Polonius was played by Mason; Horatio = Alexander; Claudius = Trueman; Osric = Murray; First Gravedigger = Russell; Ghost = Finn; and Ophelia = Mrs H. Siddons.

Mr C. Kemble appeared on December 28th, and with the exception of the production, on January 1st 1817, of *The Broken Sword*, a melodrama which ran twenty-four nights; and the pantomime, on February 4th, of *Harlequin Whittington*, in which Swan played Harlequin; Duff, Pantaloon; and Edwards, Clown; nothing worth noting occurred until February 25th, when, on the nineteenth night of the pantomime, was produced the "celebrated play, in three acts, written by D. Terry, Esq., and still performing at the Theatre Royal, Covent Garden, interspersed with music," called *Guy Mannering*. The medley overture by Bishop, so widely known to the present day, was played; the scenery, entirely new, was painted by Pyett.

This was the first of the Waverley Dramas performed at the Theatre Royal, Edinburgh, and it does not say much for Murray that he was so long in bringing it out after its production in London.* The cast in Edinburgh was as follows:—Colonel Mannering = Meggett; Henry Bertram = Jones; Dominie Sampson = Russell; Dandie Dinmont = Finn; Dirk Hatterick = Murray; Gilbert Glossin = Chippendale; Bailie Mucklethrift = Mason; Farmer Harrow = Edwards; Farmer Flail = Richardson; Sergeant M'Craw = Martin; Jock Jabos = Duff; Gabriel = Anderson; Sebastian = Crook; Franco = Master Edwards; Lucy = Mrs Cummins; Julia = Miss Dyke; Flora = Mrs Meggett; Mrs M'Candlish = Mrs Nicol; Gipsy Girl = Miss Stanfield; Meg Merrilees = Mrs H. Siddons.

This was undoubtedly a weak cast, so little wonder the piece only ran some twelve nights during its first season. Its popularity, however, was greatly increased by the important alterations that were made in the

* March 12th, 1816.

cast soon after its first production. The part of the Dominie, in Mackay's hands, became a great creation ; while Alexander, and afterwards Denham, made much of Dandie ; Benson, the vocalist, was a vast improvement on Jones as Henry Bertram, and Mrs Renaud as Meg Merrilees was completely successful.

Before continuing the account of the performances at the Theatre, it will be well to refer at length to a very interesting picture of the state of the Theatre and its company, which is given in the first number of the *Scotsman* newspaper, published on Saturday, January 25th, 1817.*

"It will hardly be expected of us that we should enter seriously into the question, whether dramatic representation be favourable to the interests of morality. . . . For ourselves we consider the drama to be pretty much like its prototype, the busy world, having its advantages and disadvantages nearly balanced. . . . Compared with London, which contains more than a million of inhabitants, Edinburgh, which does not contain a tittle of that population, cannot present us with so much variety, nor long detain mature talent of the highest order. Ours is not the best market : and therefore we ought not to look for the best wares or the most extensive assortment. Yet, for a provincial theatre, and when the degree of encouragement is considered, that of Edinburgh is extremely well supported, and great exertions are made in its favour. The manager is spirited, and anxious enough to please—children, at least, and those who are in danger of preferring the circus. But, in truth, the blame, in this respect, if there be blame, is more than shared by the public. Mr Murray, like all others who mean to live by their business, must bring to the market what customers are disposed to purchase. And his articles are certainly *got up* for sale with great care, presenting much to gratify the eye and astound the ear. Expense in the mechanical department is certainly not spared ; and is generally directed by taste to the production of effect. In superintending melo-dramatic and pantomimic performances Mr Murray is in his element, and really displays some genius. . . . After all there is something puerile in all this ; and we could wish that our manager would somewhat oftener endeavour to instruct as well as amuse, and in these cases try to rest his claim to encouragement on the merits of the play and the performers, rather than on the merits of the painter and mechanics."

It goes on to speak of the Company—

" . . . We never knew a performer who possessed so completely as Mrs Henry Siddons, all the qualities which disarm censure. The most important of these, perhaps, are distinguished chasteness and purity of manners, attitude and feelings. Everything that is harsh, or obtrusive, or soliciting, is wanting. Everything that is winning, and sweetly and inoffensively natural, is present. The light graces are all her own ; and, in serious comedy, she possesses so much *naïveté* and truth, that we forget the actress entirely. . . .

"Mrs Macnamara treads the stage with considerable dignity. Mrs Cummins is a respectable singer. Miss Dyke is a good dancer, and a pretty girl ; but, like Mrs Orger, Miss Cook, and other fine women, she evinces too little spirit. Mrs Nicol is extremely

* (Price, 10d.)

amusing in her aged department, just in most of her conceptions, and quite perfect in the acting of many of her parts. We must admit that Mr Meggett possesses a fine manly exterior, a full toned sonorous voice, and distinct articulation. Neither is confidence wanting; but what nature has done for him, is thrown away by the visible art with which he strives, most servilely and disgustingly, to imitate Kemble. The stare, shrug, stride, and measured movement which offend in the original, become something more than offensive in the imitator. In the line of genteel comedy Mr Jones is a respectable and useful performer, one who often pleases, rarely offends, and never disgusts. Mr Murray should never appear in characters requiring a display of pathos or emotion, if he feel any regard for the comfort of his auditory. Mr Russell has most of the requisites of a good comic actor; his imitations, especially of Incledon, are admirable, and we do not hesitate to say, that in respect of taste, mind, and ability, he is superior to Mathews. Mr Finn exaggerates. Mr Mason, in quaint old men, is very entertaining and original. Mr Chippendale's monotony of manner is apt to make us forget that he is useful and respectable. Mr Alexander is rather a rising performer."

On March 13th John Kemble gave the first of twelve performances which were announced as his farewell appearances on the Edinburgh stage, prior to his final retirement. On the 13th he played Cato; on the 15th, Penruddock, in *The Wheel of Fortune*; 17th, Macbeth; 18th, Wolsey, in *Henry VIII.*; 19th, Coriolanus; 20th, Richard III.; 22nd, Coriolanus repeated; 24th, Brutus, in *Julius Cæsar*; 25th, Hamlet; 26th, Brutus, in *Julius Cæsar* repeated; 27th, Coriolanus again; 29th, for the benefit of Kemble, and last night of his ever performing on this stage—Macbeth; Rosse = Murray; Macduff = Jones; Lennox = Alexander.

Scott was present on the 22nd and saw the performance of Coriolanus, as will be seen by the following letter:—

"23rd March 1817.* John Kemble is here to take leave, acting over all his great characters, and with all the spirit of his best years. He played Coriolanus last night fully as well as ever I saw him, and you know what a complete model he is of the Roman. He has made a great reformation in his habits; given up wine, which he used to swallow by pailfuls—and renewed his youth like the eagles. He seems to me always to play best those characters in which there is a predominating tinge of some overmastering passion, or acquired habit of acting or speaking, colouring the whole man. The patrician pride of Coriolanus, the stoicism of Brutus and Cato, the rapid and hurried vehemence of Hotspur, mark the class of characters I mean. But he fails where a ready and pliable yielding to the events and passions of life makes what may be termed a more natural personage. Accordingly, I think his Macbeth, Lear, and especially his Richard, inferior in spirit and truth. Yet we lose in him a most excellent critic, an accomplished scholar, and one who graced our forlorn drama with what little it has left of good sense and gentlemanlike feeling. And so exit he."

* P. 345, Life of Scott.

In a publication called "The Sale-Room," which came out at this time, is a long and exceedingly ably written criticism of Kemble's acting, which is here reprinted almost in full :—

"As a gentleman and a scholar, the present stage possesses nothing like Mr Kemble ; . . . there are a polish and grace spread over Mr Kemble, which equally distinguish him in private and professional life. In the latter we find no artist approaching him in that large variety of characters, where elegance and dignity are essential pre-requisites. Where, again, rapid transitions of passion, hurrying through the lights and shadows of the soul, are to be expressed without any necessary reference to figure or deportment, Mr Kemble has been excelled by more performers than one ; but, in all characters where loftiness of sentiment is expected to be combined with splendour of form and majesty of demeanour, where passion towers and blazes rather than withers and consumes, no actor upon record is to be regarded as his equal."

Speaking of his Cardinal Wolsey—

"The eye is first caught by the grandeur of his fine figure, venerable in the gorgeous vestments of priestly splendour ; and the lofty scorn which alternately rides in the commanding aspect, or scowls from the lurking eye. The whole form and deportment of the being before the spectator inspires him irresistibly with the association of past times, when monkish austerity silenced the voice of joy in the palaces of monarchs. . . . His deportment during the trial of the Queen was eminently striking and impressive. Studiedly calm, dignified, and submissive, he heard her piercing reproaches in respectful silence, wondering apparently that even the peevishness of grief could stir up the sufferer against *him*, but bearing, nevertheless, in proud resignation, the obloquy he had not deserved. The chief interest of the play is in the third act, the last in which he appears. It opens with the angry agitation of his mind, at the distant apprehension of the king's marriage with Anne Bullen. The power of his conceptions, the distinctness of the shades into which he broke the general tone of his feelings, and the harmonious refinement of his elocution, were here equally conspicuous :—

"It shall be to the Duchess of Alençon,
The French King's sister ; he shall marry her," &c.

These disjointed words of vexation and ire were delivered with singular precision and effect. The tone of the overbearing politician was maintained throughout ; the difficulties interposed to his plans by the passions, even of his sovereign, being evidently stated rather to animate his energy than as rousing his apprehension. This fine and just colouring, in which the skill of the actor powerfully illuminated the genius of the poet, served as an admirable preparative for the succeeding emotions of doubt, terror, and despondency, by which he was shortly after overwhelmed. The soliloquy after the departure of Henry in anger, was given with a degree of felicity which we find it difficult to describe ; and it embraced what we believe to be an entire novelty in the delivery, yet a novelty so palpably just, that one wonders it could be ever overlooked. In the midst of his alarm and terror, when he is hunting through every avenue of his brain for light and hope, a thought strikes him—

"I know 'twill stir him strongly ; yet I know
A way, if it take right, in spite of fortune,
Will bring me off again—What's this—To the pope," &c.

The lines in italics were delivered with a resumption of exultation in the midst of despair, so striking, as to indicate at once the pride of successful artifice, anticipated triumph over his enemies, and recovered ascendancy with his king. The sudden overthrow of these bright images, by the discovery that the remaining paper put into his hands by Henry was his own letter to the Pope, was delineated with equal strength and felicity."

The character fixed upon, with happy propriety, for his closing scene, was *Macbeth*, in which he took his final leave of Scotland, as noted above. He had laboured under a severe cold for a few days before, but on this memorable night the physical annoyance yielded to the energy of his mind. "He was," he said in the green room, immediately before the curtain rose, "determined to leave behind him the most perfect specimen of his art which he had ever shewn;" and his success was complete. At the termination the applause was vehement and prolonged; it ceased, was resumed, rose again, was reiterated, and again was hushed. In a few minutes the curtain rose, and Mr Kemble came forward to deliver his farewell address, written for him by his friend Walter Scott.

On March 31st—the second day after Kemble had made his last—Liston the famous low comedian made his first appearance in Edinburgh, his first part being that of Jacob Gawky in the *Chapter of Accidents*. His success in Edinburgh was unqualified, the public flocking to see him, and the press being hearty in their praise. On April 2nd he played Dominie Sampson in *Guy Mannering*, and closed his engagement on April 5th. On the 7th, Kean once more appeared. He played for a week, and was freely criticised and compared to Kemble, whose acting was then so fresh in the minds of the playgoers. The following notice is from the same pen that wrote the long criticism on Kemble quoted above.

The article commences by comparing Kemble and Kean, and says:—

"It is impossible to describe or conceive, two men more widely different, or rather more positively contrasted; and yet, in the performance of many of the same characters, before the same audiences, each has been hailed with nearly equal applause. While Mr Kemble was distinguished by a face and form of the most perfect and heroic grandeur, and by a deportment in harmonious unison with everything chivalrous and princely, Mr Kean has no personal requisite whatever, save an eye of matchless expression. His figure is minute, and would be almost insignificant but for the o'er-informing mind, which invigorates and expands it. His deportment when the spectator chances to be sufficiently unmoved to examine it, is found to be ungraceful and angular; and his voice is both limited in extent, and hoarse and husky in tone. Against such drawbacks it is clear that a mighty genius alone could oppose itself with success; and we have the less scruple in stating them thus unceremoniously, because Mr Kean's triumph over all material obstacles is known to be complete.

"The moment that Mr Kean takes possession of the stage, the spectator feels that he

has to do with no common person. He feels, in the first place, that he sees something which is altogether new and original. A being is placed before him, apparently quite unconscious that an audience is watching his looks, and conducting himself exactly as he would do, if he were either alone or holding actual intercourse with the persons on the stage along with him. In entering upon his part, you see nothing professional or prescriptive. Because Richard turns out a murderer and a villain, his representative does not approach as if he were desirous that every spectator should start up and exclaim, 'There's blood upon thy face !' Mr Kean knows that nature recognises no such mummery, but that although the constant workings of the mind do in time impress their index upon the countenance, yet even the most decided characters preserve in their general bearing the ordinary aspect of human life. This sobriety is one of the great sources of Mr Kean's success. There is another distinction peculiar to Mr Kean, which we shall state, and this is the imposing air of truth which he imparts to his soliloquies. It may be said of most actors, in this particular, that they are never less alone than when most alone. His absorption is so profound, as not only to exclude the idea that he is aware of the presence of others, but even, if that were possible, to exclude the idea of himself.

"The prevailing characteristic of Mr Kean's acting is energy.

"He seldom, like Kemble, raises the spectator into lofty sympathy, or that sort of admiration which makes him glow with a similar feeling of superiority to that which he admires : his power rather displays itself in withering and subduing all within the reach of his agency. The softer passions are much less under his dominion. Every other Richard which we have witnessed in this scene (with Anne) produces either ridicule or disgust. Cooke was sarcastic and coarse ; Kemble was cold and artificial ; Kean alone so husbands and directs his art that his success appears (with Anne) not only probable but natural, and the spectators dare hardly censure that frailty with which he is forced to acknowledge a reluctant sympathy. But it is chiefly in the heroic scenes, and most of all in the glory of his death, that Kean stands pre-eminent. It is here that he bears down everything like doubt or opposition. The fire and rapidity of his action—his instantaneous transition from passion to passion, the 'thousand hearts that swell within his bosom'—draw shouts of enthusiasm from the audience."

Kean's pronunciation was bad where "R's" were concerned—he used to say,—

"Most potent, gurr-ave, and urr-reverend Signors."

Murray took his benefit on April 15th, and played Tony, in *She Stoops to Conquer*, for the first time, and the season came to a close on May 7th.

It should be recorded here that Moss, the low comedian, once such a favourite in Edinburgh, died, after a very protracted illness, on January 11th 1817.

The summer season, 1817, opened on July 14th with the *Rivals*. Sir Anthony Absolute = Mason ; Sir Lucius = Trueman ; Captain Absolute = Jones ; David = Chippendale ; Fag = Alexander ; Mrs Malaprop = Mrs Nicol ; Lydia Languish = Mrs M'Namara ; Lucy = Miss Stanfield ; Maid = Miss Nicol ; Julia = Mrs H. Siddons ; after which *Valentine and Orson* ;

Orson, the wild man = Grimaldi, his first appearance in this city. On the 15th Grimaldi played Dame Cicely Suet, and afterwards Clown, and sang Tippetty Witchit. Grimaldi's son appeared along with his father on the 16th, and on the 19th Grimaldi took his benefit. On July 21st, J. Johnstone commenced an engagement, and on the 23rd was joined by Emery, who, on the 25th, played his original part of Dandie Dinmont in *Guy Mannering*. On August 5th Miss Stephens and Mr Sinclair appeared, and the season came to a close on the 16th. The shortness of the summer season this year had been caused by Murray taking his company through to act in Glasgow, where they seem to have done very well, so well in fact, that they did not return to Edinburgh before January 10th 1818, on which evening, at seven o'clock, *The Way to Keep Him* was produced. On the 12th Charles Mathews commenced a very successful engagement. In his letters home to his wife he gives the following recital of what happened during his visit. *The Actor of all Work*, produced on January 15th, was a great success; he "acted it as a Scotchman."

"Murray acted the manager, and when I said, 'I'm told you-a set up a show i' this toon,' the screech was immense.

"January 19th. This will be a most successful trip. They are flocking to the box office this morning to obtain places for almost every night of the *Actor of all Work*. They have quite confirmed my opinion of them, that they are the only real Theatrical audience in the three kingdoms. Every line of *stuff* is literally a roar here, and many points that were unnoticed at the Haymarket are here caught up with avidity. I am in high feather, and the attentions of Murray and Mrs Henry Siddons, the comforts of the Theatre, my dressing-room, altogether make this the only Theatre out of London where I like my profession. I was placed in a most awkward situation in the Courts of Law on Saturday. Erskine, while pleading, glanced his eye towards me, stopped, laughed, and shook his fist at me. This drew the eyes of about 200 people upon me. I blushed up to the eyes. When he sat down I observed he wrote a note with a pencil to the judge, Lord Gillies. He craned his neck directly to look at me, and when we came out of court, Erskine said, 'What the devil brings you here, mon,—you spoilt my speech,—I canna afford to be taken off. Did you observe Lord Gillies look at you? I wrote him a caird, and told him to be on his guard, as I was, or we should both be upon the stage before supper time.'"

Matthews took his benefit on the 26th, and on February 4th the melodrama of *The Falls of Clyde** was produced, but it only ran four nights. On the 12th *Douglas* was played, the Lady Randolph being Mrs Renaud, late Mrs Powell, her first appearance here for ten years. This was a most

* From Drury Lane.

valuable addition to the company, for, in heavy parts, she was probably at the time without an equal on the British stage.

February 16th, *The Appeal*, a new tragedy, "never acted." Ethelstane = Putman; Hildebrand = Dobbs; Helgent = Yates, his first appearance on this stage, and fifth on any stage; Reginald = Jones; Oswald = Anderson; Ariette = Mrs H. Siddons; Isabel = Mrs Renaud. Prologue spoken by Murray, and epilogue by Mrs H. Siddons. It ran four nights. Some very interesting information is to be had from the playbills of this season, regarding Yates' early connection with the stage. On February 21st, *Merchant of Venice*; Shylock = Yates, his first appearance in that character.

February 26th, Alexander's benefit. *Othello* was played. Othello = Alexander (he did not appear again during the season); Desdemona = Mrs H. Siddons; Iago = Yates.

March 13th, *Richard III.* Richard = Yates, his first appearance in that character.

Kean opened for eight nights on March 16th, and on the 19th he played *Richard II.*, "never acted here." * Richard II. = Kean; Bolingbroke = Yates.

After having been closed from March 24th, the Theatre reopened on the 31st with *Richard III.*, Yates assuming the title rôle for the second time on any stage.

April 6th, *As You Like it.* Jacques = Yates, first time on any stage.

Kean revisited Edinburgh, appearing again on April 7th, and on the following evening he played Romeo for the first time here, with *Paul and Virginia*, Paul by Kean, being "his first appearance in an afterpiece in this Theatre."

April 9th, besides playing Sir Giles in *New Way to Pay Old Debts*, Kean made his first appearance here in comedy, acting Abel Drugger in *The Tobacconist*.

Mrs Renaud took her benefit on April 11th, on which occasion she impersonated Hamlet, a part she had before played both in London and Dublin.

Yates played in *Richard III.* and *The Actor of all Work* for his benefit on April 20th, and the season terminated on May 22nd.

* Playbill.

This season does not seem to have been nearly so successful as the previous one, evidence of which, if its shortness was not sufficient proof, is given in the following article, which appeared in the *Scotsman* of Saturday, March 7th, 1818:—

“We have hitherto been rather indolent in the Theatrical department; but, in truth, the drama with us has not of late presented many claims to attention. The Theatre, besides, does not seem to be a very fashionable amusement in Edinburgh. Why this should be, we do not see very clearly; for although our dramatic corps is not very strong, it is, after all, considered the best out of London.

“The house itself is infinitely more easy, and light, and comfortable, than the great Theatres of London. In the Edinburgh Theatre we sit comparatively in a drawing-room; we feel that we make part of a company. Without any other attractions then, one would infer that the Theatre should be tolerably well frequented. But there remains one thing still to be taken notice of, which, if the people of Edinburgh were as intellectual as they are fond of being thought, would be much more effective than all the rest put together, we mean the delight which every cultivated mind receives from having it in its power to join with others in a common feeling of fear, dislike, respect, esteem, or admiration.

“To see a large assembly moved with one common sentiment, and one which warms and expands our own bosoms, is a pleasure of the very highest character. It is one, too, which, we think, might be enjoyed almost any night that the Theatre is open.

“But Edinburgh audiences, if we mistake not, are exceedingly chary of committing themselves, that is, of relying on the justness of their own feelings, or the accuracy of their own judgments. . . . We remember only one instance in which an Edinburgh audience yielded, or rather was surprised into an expression of momentary feeling. This was on the occasion of Mrs Siddons taking her first farewell of the Edinburgh Theatre. The play was *Henry VIII.*, the characters well cast and ably supported. It was shortly after the Prince Regent had quarreled with the Whigs, and the moment that Mr Henry Siddons, who impersonated Wolsey, delivered the words—

‘Oh, how wretched
Is that poor man that hangs on princes’ favours!’

the whole audience seemed electrified. The feeling and expression was strong and simultaneous; and, as the house was crowded in every part, the effect was truly sublime.”

During the summer season, which extended from July 6th to October 10th, Booth, from Covent Garden, made his first bow to an Edinburgh audience (July 6th to 18th). Miss O'Neill again appeared, with Mrs Abbott supporting her (July 20th to August 1st); and Miss Brunton made her first appearance in Edinburgh on August 22nd, acting Letitia Hardy in the *Belle's Stratagem*.

While Miss O'Neill was here, *Fazio*, a Covent Garden tragedy, was produced. Yates played Buskin in *Killing no Murder* on August 22nd, gave imitations after Mathews' style, and sang the Mail Coach.

This is decidedly curious, as being the first time he had attempted this style of performance, for which afterwards he became so famous. On September 7th Yates played Dominie Sampson for the first time.

Between October 10th and December 3rd, on the latter of which dates the Theatre reopened for the winter season, very considerable alterations and improvements had been introduced. The playbill for the opening night announced that—

“The Theatre Royal having undergone considerable alterations, and the whole of the interior being entirely repainted, and illuminated with gas, on the principle adopted in the London Theatres, it will re-open on Thursday, December 3rd, when will be presented

She Stoops to Conquer.

Hardcastle = Chippendale ; Hastings = Alexander ; Tony = Murray ; Diggory = Duff ; Mrs Hardcastle = Mrs Nicol ; Miss Melville = Miss Dyke ; Maid = Miss Nicol ; Miss Hardcastle = Mrs H. Siddons.

“Doors open at 6. An Officer of Police will constantly attend the Theatre, and Ladies and Gentlemen may wait, at the conclusion of the performance, in their boxes, until the attendants inform them of the arrival of their carriages.”

The latter is a provision which might with advantage be adopted in these times at our Theatres.

The *Scotsman* of December 5th says :—

“The house is not only clean and neat, but it is painted in a light brilliant style, and the effect of the gas lights is truly brilliant—superb—magnifique ! as a Frenchman would say. But we do not mean to weaken curiosity by a description. On Thursday, December 3rd, a Committee of Directors inspected the alterations of the Theatre, on which occasion the whole building was splendidly illuminated with gas. The preparations for relighting the Theatre in the old method, should any deficiency of gas be experienced, were particularly investigated, and, with the other improvements, received the warm approbation of the visitants. An experiment was tried in the Theatre a few evenings since, to see how speedily the old body of light could be brought into action, in case of necessity, when it was found, that from the immense extent of pipe within the walls of the Theatre, and the property of gas to ascend, the centre chandelier continued to burn for nearly ten minutes after the main pipe was turned off, and by its gradual decay, gave full opportunity for the re-illumination of the stage with oil.”

Yates came on December 4th to fulfil his engagement ; he had been acting at Covent Garden, and had to return there again.

On the same evening J. Farren, from the Theatre Royal, Brighton, made his first appearance here, and fifth on any stage. December 5th, Terry commenced a brief engagement, playing Sir Peter Teazle ; on the 11th he played his original part of Mr Green in the Haymarket piece, *The Green Man*, and took his benefit on the 19th.

On December 21st an important addition was made to the company in the person of Hamerton, from Covent Garden. On this occasion he appeared as Young Norval in *Douglas*. Upon the same evening was brought out Colman's MS. play of *X Y Z*. *

Hamerton made his second appearance on the 23rd, playing Othello.

On the 26th the great Mackay, then an almost unknown comedian from the Theatres of Glasgow and Aberdeen, joined the company, an addition that was to prove more fruitful of results than any other made by Murray during his long term of management.

The play on the 26th was *The Jealous Wife*, in which Hamerton played Mr Oakly; Chippendale, Major Oakly; Murray, Charles; Mackay, Mr Russell; Miss Nicol, Toilet; and Mrs H. Siddons, Mrs Oakly (her second appearance in the part).

Mackay's second appearance was as Lubin in *Wandering Boys* (December 30th). On January 6th (1819) Yates played Sir John Falstaff in the *Merry Wives of Windsor*, for the first time. On the 9th *She Wou'd, and She Wou'd Not*. Hypolito = Mrs H. Siddons, her first appearance in the part. Yates took his benefit on January 21st, when he "respectfully informs his friends and the public that he will be 'at Home.'" He then left, and resumed his work at Covent Garden.


A revival of the *Tempest* was given on February 4th; it seems to have been well staged, and ran six nights.

The next piece produced marks so important an era in our dramatic annals, that it will be best to commence a new chapter with an account of it.

* It had been suppressed for some time by the Lord Chamberlain.

CHAPTER XVII.

ROB ROY.

E have now to chronicle the production of the most memorable and important piece ever put upon the Theatre Royal boards, namely, *Rob Roy*.^{*} Its popularity was immediate, and has continued, without abatement, to the present day. In that respect it stands without a rival on the Scottish Stage. It has further claims however for unique honours in our Theatrical Annals, for it gave to us the actor Mackay, as the Bailie, an impersonation standing out in extraordinary prominence, both as a creation and for its association with the "Great Unknown." The production of *Rob Roy* came at a time when the managerial coffers were empty, seasons bad, and few indications of improvement. It filled the house for forty-one consecutive nights, and was repeated many times every season, during Murray's period of management. It was often and appropriately called the "Managerial sheet anchor," and since Murray's time, managers seem invariably, when in doubt, to have played *Rob Roy*; it has in fact remained a trump card ever since its original production.

"This present evening, Monday, February 15th, will be performed for the first time at this Theatre, the celebrated musical Drama in Three Acts, as performed at the Theatre Royal, Covent Garden, with unbounded applause, † called,

ROB ROY MACGREGOR;

OR, AULD LANGSYNE.

The new scenery by Messrs Pyett, Grieve, and William Grieve."

The cast was as follows :—Sir Frederick Vernon = Anderson ; Rashleigh Osbaldiston = Alexander ; Francis Osbaldiston = Benson ; Mr Owen

^{*} This was not the first adaptation of the novel played in Edinburgh, however. See under "The Circus."

[†] Pocock's version produced originally at Covent Garden, March 12th 1818. Rob Roy = Mr Macready ; Bailie Nicol Jarvie = Mr Liston ; Francis = Mr Sinclair ; Dougal = Mr Tokely ; Diana = Miss Stephens ; Helen = Mrs Egerton.



Painted by Wm. Allan

Engraved by J. Horsburgh

MACKAY AS THE BAILIE.

= Chippendale ; Captain Thornton = W. Murray ; Rob Roy Macgregor Campbell = Hamerton ; Major Galbraith = Dobbs ; MacStewart = Shaw ; Bailie Nicol Jarvie = Mackay ; Jobson = J. Farren ; Saunders Wylie = M'Grigor ; Andrew = Sandy ; Sergeant = Collyer ; Allan = Martin ; Diana Vernon = Miss M'Alpine, from Covent Garden, her first appearance here ; Martha = Miss Nicol ; Mattie = Miss Stanfield ; Hostess = Mrs Shaw ; Jean M'Alpine = Mrs Nicol ; Helen MacGregor = Mrs Renaud. The part of Dougal is omitted in the bill for the first night, but is in that of the second and subsequent ones ; it was played by Duff.

The house was crowded and the piece received with thunders of applause. Scott's entrance to his box was the signal for the first burst of enthusiasm ; in fact, his appearance in the Theatre always procured a similar recognition. It is related by Lockhart, in his *Life*, that on this occasion he was so anxious, that he left his box during the performance to remind Murray that Mattie must have a mantle along with her lanthorn. The first criticism quoted is from the *Courant* of February 18th :—

“THEATRE.

“A play founded on the popular novel of *Rob Roy* was performed here on Monday night to a crowded audience, and very favourably received. It is merely the novel compressed into three acts, with the greater part of the dialogue borrowed from the same fertile source, and is another among the many instances of the shifts to which our dramatic caterers are put to, that they may provide variety for the public taste, and is also a proof of the dearth of dramatic talent in an age remarkable for literary men fitted to excel in all its various departments. It is but justice to the manager to say that he has got it up in a superior manner, both as to dresses and scenery ; indeed, we do not remember to have seen finer scenes than the view of Glasgow Bridge, the Clachan of Aberfoyle, and the Lake by moonlight. As a sufficient recommendation of its excellence we may only remark, that the music is a selection from our national airs, and to do Mr Benson justice, he sang his songs in a masterly manner ; there is, however, a lameness in his acting which he ought to avoid. Miss M'Alpine sung also very sweetly. The part of Rob Roy was performed tolerably well by Mr Hamerton. He is in general too loud and declamatory, and should keep in mind that even in the very whirlwind of passion he ought to beget a temperance that may give it smoothness. Helen was done in Mrs Renaud's best manner. Mr Mackay, already a favourite with the Edinburgh audience, has fully confirmed their regard by his very excellent performance of Bailie Nicol Jarvie. The success of the piece depends much on the acting of this character, combining warmth of feeling with the utmost self-importance and vanity. Mr Mackay entered fully into the conception of the author, and displayed the greatest judgment in its delineation ; in our opinion, from his possessing a knowledge of the Scotch dialect, he is superior to Liston, that celebrated performer making the character speak neither Scotch nor English, but a compound of both. The richness of our native dialect in such hands, joined to chaste and excellent acting, is a treat we have seldom witnessed. The other performers supported their parts very well, and we never saw Duff to so much advantage as in Dougal.

"The dresses are perfectly agreeable to the costumes of the period, but while the manager is so particular as to arm the Highlanders with long Spanish guns, he ought also to have given the tartan rather than grey stockings."

Taking into consideration not only the success the piece gained, but its undoubted merits as a drama, it must be confessed that the above criticism was not happy in its general tone of depreciation. The *Scotsman* critic, however, with the true instinct of a practised hand, did not hesitate to estimate *Rob Roy* at its proper worth. Although too long to quote in full, the following extracts sufficiently carry the "ring" of the notice to prove this:— *

"He who is at once a man and a Scotsman must be delighted with *Rob Roy*. Why should we not be proud of our national genius, humour, music, kindness, and fidelity?—*why not be national?* We found ourselves pre-eminently so on Monday evening. Our recollection of the novel of *Rob Roy*, and the almost universal genius of the author, with the perfect conviction that he is a Scotsman, and was then present in the Theatre, gave sufficient interest to this musical drama at its commencement; and the manner in which the different parts were cast and supported not only preserved it to the last, but made it grow upon us, so as to become absolutely intoxicating—the gratification was so complete as to leave us nothing to wish for—except, on reflection, that the author whose prose tales can thus be so easily worked up into an interesting drama, should write expressly for the stage.

"Mr Mackay was no longer, what we had been previously under the necessity of considering him, a tolerably clever actor; he was Bailie Nicol Jarvie himself in *propria persona*."

"The Jail scene is altogether excellent, except always the musical finale, which was *mal apropos*, absurd and ridiculous."

After devoting much space to criticising Mackay's performance and making a proposition that the music and songs should all be given between the acts, instead of interfering with the progress of the piece, the notice goes on to say that—

"Of Duff's Dougal, there was truth, energy, and keeping united in his performance; Mr Hamerton never appeared at this Theatre with so much advantage; Mr Alexander looked and performed the villain, Rashleigh, in a very creditable manner; and as Mrs Renaud both seemed and acted all that we could wish for or almost imagine in Helen, there is no wonder that this drama gave more than satisfaction."

The effect of the production on the public, not only the play-going section, but hundreds who had never before been within the walls of a theatre, was marvellous. Night after night crowds went to follow the fortunes of the outlawed Highland chief, or to laugh over the pawky humour of Bailie Nicol Jarvie. After the twenty-fourth performance the

* February 20th.

Scotsman noted that "the house is more crowded than during the first night," and, as already recorded, it ran *forty-one consecutive* nights besides odd evenings before the close of the season.

Writing to his friend Terry, on the 18th of April, Scott says:—

"Murray has netted upwards of £3000 on *Rob Roy*; to be sure the man who played the Bailie made a piece of acting equal to whatever has been seen in the profession. For my own part, I was actually electrified by the truth, spirit, and humour which he threw into the part. It was the living Nicol Jarvie; conceited, pragmatical, cautious, generous, proud of his connection with Rob Roy, frightened for him at the same time, and yet extremely desirous to interfere with him as an adviser. The tone in which he seemed to give him up for a lost man after having provoked him into some burst of Highland violence, 'Ah! Rab, Rab!' was quite inimitable. I do assure you I never saw a thing better played."

The following is also from Scott's pen. It is an extract from a letter to Miss Joanna Baillie, and although written two years later than the former extract, is best inserted here:—

"... A Scots performer, named Mackay, is going up to London to play Bailie Nicol Jarvie for a single night at Covent Garden, and I beg you of all dear loves to go and see him; for taking him in that single character, I am not sure I ever saw anything in my life possessing so much truth and comic effect at the same time. . . . In short, I never saw a part better sustained; I pray you to collect a party of Scotch friends to see it. I doubt whether the exhibition will prove as satisfactory to those who do not know the original from whom the resemblance is taken. I observe the English demand, as is natural, broad caricature in the depicting of national peculiarities."

Regarding the following letter, which reached Mackay in the handwriting of one of the Ballantynes, but which was from the "Great Unknown," no comments are necessary:—

"To Mr Charles Mackay, Theatre Royal, Edinburgh.

(*Private.*)

"FRIEND MACKAY,—My lawful occasions having brought me from my residence at Gandercleuch to this great city, it was my lot to fall into company with certain friends, who impetrated from me a consent to behold the stage-play, which hath been framed forth of an history entitled Rob (*seu potius* Robert) Roy; which history, although it existeth not in mine erudite work, entitled Tales of my Landlord, hath nathless a near relation in style and structure to these pleasant narrations. Wherefore, having surmounted those arguments whilk were founded upon the unseemliness of a personage in my place and profession appearing in an open stage play-house, and having buttoned the terminations of my cravat into my bosom, in order to preserve mine incognito, and, indeed, an outer coat over mine usual garments, so that the hue thereof might not betray my calling, I did place myself (much elbowed by those who little knew whom they did incommode) in that place of the Theatre called the two shilling gallery, and beheld the show with great delectation, even from the rising of the curtain to the fall thereof.

"Chiefly, my facetious friend, was I enamoured of the very lively representation of Bailie

Nicol Jarvie, in so much that I became desirous to communicate to thee my great admiration thereof, nothing doubting that it will give thee satisfaction to be apprised of the same. Yet, further, in case thou should'st be of that numerous class of persons who set less store by good words than good deeds, and understanding that there is assigned unto each stage-player a special night, called a benefit (it will do thee no harm to know that the phrase cometh from two Latin words, *bene* and *facio*), on which their friends and patrons show forth their benevolence. I now send thee mine in the form of a five ell web (*hoc jocose*, to express a note for £5), as a meet present for the Bailie, himself a weaver, and the son of a worthy deacon of that craft. The which propine I send thee in token that it is my purpose, business, and health permitting, to occupy the central place of the pit on the night of the said beneficiary or benefit.

"Friend Mackay! From one whose profession it is to teach others, thou must excuse the freedom of a caution. I trust that thou wilt remember that, as excellence in thine art cannot be attained without much labour, so neither can it be extended, or even maintained, without constant and unremitted exertion; and, farther, that the decorum of a performer's private character (and it gladdeth me to hear that thine is respectable) addeth not a little to the value of his public exertions.

"Finally, in respect there is nothing perfect in this world—at least, I have never received a wholly faultless version from the very best of my pupils—I pray thee not to let Rob Roy twirl thee around in the ecstasy of thy joy, in regard it oversteps the limit of nature, which otherwise thou so sedulously preservest in thine admirable national portraiture of Bailie Nicol Jarvie.—I remain, thy sincere friend and wellwisher,

"JEDEDIAH CLEISHBOTHAM."

Rob Roy infused new life into the theatrical economy of Edinburgh, and one of the first, and as it proved, best results of its success was the establishment of the Edinburgh Theatrical Fund; an institution which did much good work while it lasted, but finally dwindled away with the necessity for its existence, as our Theatre gradually ceased to be local in its character. The first intimation of this scheme is found reported in the *Courant* as follows:—

"Theatre Royal,

"Edinburgh, February 26th 1819.

"At a meeting of the company of the Theatre Royal, Edinburgh, held this day at eleven o'clock in the green room of the said Theatre, Mr Chippendale in the chair, it was, upon the motion of Mr Jones, unanimously resolved that the establishment of a fund for the relief and support of decayed performers, was an institution every way advantageous and honourable to the profession."

A committee consisting of Messrs Chippendale, Jones, Hamerton, and W. Murray was accordingly chosen by ballot to take the matter up.

This was followed by another general meeting on April 2nd, which approved of the rules proposed by the committee for the government of the Fund, and the scheme was formally established, under the patron-

age of His Royal Highness the Duke of York ; their Graces the Dukes of Gordon, Argyle, Queensberry, and Huntly ; the Right Honourable the Earls of Buchan, Moray, Wemyss and March, Glasgow, Hopetoun, and Fife ; Lords Gray and Belhaven ; the Lord President, the Lord Advocate, and the Lord Provost ; Sir W. Forbes of Pitsligo, Bart., Sir John Hope of Pinkie, Sir John Hay of Hayston, Sir Michael Shaw Stewart, Walter Scott, Esq., and William Erskine, Esq. The directors for the ensuing year were Messrs Chippendale, Hamerton, Jones, Mackay, and W. Murray.

Murray set apart the evening of June 5th, when *Rob Roy* was played, as a benefit for the Fund, and so this scheme, which in a few years was to become historically connected with one of the most memorable events in the literary records of the present century, was fairly launched into being.

Commencing April 2nd, Edmund Kean appeared for a few nights, but his reception was not so enthusiastic as on previous visits. This seems to have been owing to the reports which had been circulated regarding his recent conduct in connection with the production of Miss Porter's tragedy of *Switzerland* at Drury Lane. Kean had undoubtedly contributed his powerful aid to damn this piece on its first representation, by *not* acting his part ; and the subsequent withdrawal of Bucke's tragedy of *The Italians* from rehearsal, on account of the fear the author entertained that Kean would attempt to ruin his piece in the same manner, had raised quite a clamour in London, which found a very respectable echo in the northern metropolis. His magnificent acting, however, carried all opposition before it, and the press, after casually noticing the scandal, joined unanimously in writing his praises. It is worthy of note that Calcraft, an actor who, for several years after this, was connected in a leading way with the Edinburgh stage, made his first appearance during Kean's engagement (April 7th, Iago to Kean's Othello).

Calcraft had been an army officer, but being out of employment in that line, took to the stage. He came to Edinburgh from Newcastle, and after taking the lead several years here, he went to Dublin, where, in 1824, he became manager. He remained in that capacity until 1851, when, after experiencing several bad seasons, he had to retire. He then became private secretary (he had resumed his patronymic, Cole, by this time) to Charles Kean, and in 1859 wrote that gentleman's life. He died in February 1870.

Miss Fanny Kelly made her first bow to an Edinburgh audience on the 26th April as Peggy in the *Country Girl*, and Louisa in the *Deserter*

of *Naples*. Mackay's benefit came on at the end of the winter season proper, and it was generally supposed he would appear as the Bailie. It seems, however, that there existed a rule in the Theatre that pieces produced for the first time during the same season should never be played on benefit nights. So he made up his bill with *Guy Mannering* and *The Wanderer*. This did not satisfy the public, and a sort of row got up in the Theatre. Murray was called for, and stated that the programme was Mackay's arranging, which statement being endorsed by the *bénéficiaire*, the house became quiet. The *Scotsman*, in reviewing the whole matter, rather blames Murray for not paying enough consideration to the public, "who," it says, "have often refrained from blaming, out of consideration for Mrs Henry Siddons and her family."

On May 12th Mrs Renaud appeared for the first time in the part of Meg Merrilees, being for her own benefit.

Murray had his benefit on May 17th, when Mason came through from Glasgow to act Sir Andrew Aguecheek in *Twelfth Night*, Murray playing Sebastian and his sister Viola. In June one of the infant phenomena of the age, Miss Clara Fisher, appeared in such parts as Shylock, etc. Mrs Cummins, Mr Knight, Miss Stephens, Mr Smith (Drury Lane), Mr Farren,* Mr Abbott (Covent Garden), and Miss O'Neill, all appeared during the summer. Mr Macready also visited the town, but was not cordially received. During September Mr Henry Erskine Johnstone appeared for a few evenings.

The last engagement for the combined winter and summer seasons was that of Charles Mathews, whose success cannot be better related than in his own words.

"To Mrs Mathews. †

"Edinburgh, October 20th 1819.

"I am going on famously here. I gave my 'Trip' on Wednesday. It would have done your heart good to hear the roars at the 'Scotch Woman;' the success of which I rather doubted here. It is the greatest hit I ever made anywhere in that part. Bless their good-natured hearts! It was repeated on Thursday and last night (Friday). I netted the last night about £180. At the words, 'he was a vary good-natured body,' which I hit happily, they gave me a thundering round of applause which swelled into a hurrah, and the cheering at the close was delicious. To-morrow, my benefit; *all* the boxes taken—the 'Trip' again; my week will give me £300.

* This was the second of that name, and father to the present Mr Farren. His visit here was after his first season at Covent Garden, where he had made his *debut* on the preceding September 10th, as Sir Peter Teazle.

† Life of Charles Mathews, vol. iii., p. 95.

"A curious circumstance :—I received a letter from a Methodist preacher here, last week, to say he was a pastor of a congregation who could not afford to purchase a Bible, and requesting me to make a present of one ; and I have done so ! I made a condition that the following inscription should be upon it :—'The Gift of Charles Mathews, *Comedian*.' It is finished, and will be announced to the elect next Sunday ! *

"CHARLES MATHEWS."

The above letter, although interesting, is not accurate. It is dated the 20th, speaks of Friday as "yesterday," and specifies the date of his benefit as "to-morrow," *i.e.* Sunday. As a matter of fact his benefit was on the 18th, and closed the long season. Mr Murray took occasion, as usual, on the "last night," to make a few remarks, and said it was the longest season ever recorded in Edinburgh, and that its success had been unprecedented.

The following season was opened on November 27th with the *Belle's Stratagem*. Sir George Touchwood = Calcraft ; Doricourt = Jones ; Hardy = Mackay ; Flutter = W. Murray ; Lady Touchwood = Mrs W. Murray ; † Letitia Hardy = Mrs H. Siddons.

Calcraft was retained this year as lead along with Cooper, from the Theatres Royal, Liverpool and Manchester, who joined on November 29th, when he played Hamlet, the other parts being cast as follows :—Polonius = Loveday, from Liverpool and Manchester, first appearance here ; Laertes = Calcraft ; Horatio = W. Murray ; Ghost = Alexander ; Gravedigger = Mackay. November 30th, *The Will*. Albina = Miss Rock, from Theatre Royal, Dublin, "her first appearance here for ten years." On December 1st Huckel, from the English Opera House, took the part of Henry Bertram in *Guy Mannering*, that of Lucy Bertram being filled by a Mrs Garrick from Liverpool.

On December 11th *Rob Roy* was played with an altered cast, Huckel being the Francis, Cooper the Rob Roy, Mrs Garrick the Diana Vernon, and Loveday the Mr Owen.

The pantomime brought out this year was *Harlequin Gulliver*, which was produced December 27th, and ran thirty-three nights ; on January 25th, the *Comedy of Errors* was produced on a very complete scale, Cooper and Jones played the Antipholus', and Loveday and Murray the Dromios.

King George III. having been gathered to his fathers, the Theatre was closed by order of the Lord Chamberlain from February 1st to 17th.

* The preacher (Thomas Weston) had known Mathews' father, who had been a strict Methodist.

† Late Miss Dyke.

On the 19th, Mrs H. Siddons recited a monody in memory of his late Majesty.

The facts about the production of the *Heart of Midlothian* in this Theatre on February 23rd 1820, require rather careful investigation. So early as December 1819, Tom Dibdin's adaptation of the novel was underlined for production at the Royal, while a piece of the same name was actually being played in the "Pantheon."* Whether the minor Theatre actually did play Dibdin's version or not cannot be said; but it is quite certain that the version produced at the Royal was *not* Dibdin's, although it had been advertised as specially licensed for that Theatre. Dibdin, in his "Reminiscences,"† states his account of the affair very clearly, as follows:—

"The drama of the *Heart of Midlothian*, which had been acted at Covent Garden, was produced at the Theatre Royal, Edinburgh, and the Surrey Theatre. My *Heart of Midlothian* was acted at the minor Theatre, when its attraction, for many nights, was almost beyond precedent. Mrs H. Siddons having occasion to visit town, came to the Surrey to see our piece; and having solicited a copy properly marked for representation, produced it at the Theatre Royal on her return to Edinburgh, as Dibdin's *Heart of Midlothian*; and notwithstanding its prior and frequent repetition at the Caledonian Circus, and the recent performance of the regular Covent Garden one at the Royal, our minor paraphrase rode triumphantly through the remainder of the Edinburgh season."

This seems to be substantially correct; as a matter of fact, however, the first version produced at the Royal ran for twenty-eight consecutive nights, while the second production only got the length of some eight nights in all. Regarding the first of these it may be mentioned that the scenery, which chiefly consisted of views of Edinburgh and its vicinity, was specially painted by Mr Nasmyth. The cast was as follows:—John, Duke of Argyle = Jones; Staunton = Calcraft; John Dumbie = Mackay; David Deans = Loveday; Bartoline Saddletree = Duff; Reuben = J. Farren; Mr Sharpitlaw = Welsh; Sergeant of the Guard = Aikin; James Ratcliffe = Alexander; Tyburn Tam = Gray; Black Frank = W. Murray; Queen of England = Mrs Renaud; Lady Suffolk = Mrs Mackay; Jeanie Deans = Mrs H. Siddons; Effie Deans = Mrs W. Murray; Mrs Glass = Mrs Nicol; Betty = Miss Nicol; Margery Murdockson = Miss Penman, her first appearance here; Madge Wildfire = Miss Rock.

Although not so great a success, the *Heart of Midlothian* came very near being as popular as *Rob Roy*. The length of the run was great,

* See chapter on "The Circus."

† Vol. ii., p. 165.

besides which it continued as a stock piece as long as resident companies existed.

The Dumbiedykes of Mackay and the Ratcliffe of Alexander seem to have been very fine impersonations; and the *Scotsman* critic speaks of Mrs H. Siddons' Jeanie as something quite above the ordinary line of acting. On the appearance of Scott in the lower boxes, loud hurrahs rang through the Theatre, and directly afterwards, when Lord Erskine was recognised in the second row, his lordship was greeted with a similar welcome.

On March 27th, Liston commenced a five nights engagement, and on the 29th played Dominie Sampson, a performance which, the *Scotsman* said, he made much more of than could have been expected from any one not a native of Scotland.

After a long absence Cooper reappeared on April 8th, on the occasion of Mrs H. Siddons' benefit; on the 13th Prior, from the Pantheon, made his first appearance at this Theatre, playing Rob Roy; and on the 19th Murray produced for his own benefit, *More Plots than One*, for the first time here. Duff had *Rob Roy* staged for his benefit on May 26th, and after the play sang an entirely new song written expressly for the occasion, called the "Dougal Creature's Visit to Edinburgh."

On June 3rd, a benefit was given on behalf of the Edinburgh Theatrical Fund, when *Much Ado* and *Heart of Midlothian* (compressed into three acts) were performed, and the season came to a conclusion on June 10th, with a benefit * to H. E. Johnston, who had been acting for a few evenings.

The summer season scarcely produced any event worthy of note. Young came on July 3rd (opening night); Kean on the 17th, and on the 29th took his farewell benefit before going to America; Miss Stephens and Mr Horn followed (August 21st), while the season came to a close on September 2nd.

The following winter season (1820-1) opened on November 15th with *She Stoops to Conquer*, in which Terry played Hardcastle, being his first appearance for two years. He had joined the company, and took leading parts for a good portion of the season. On the opening night Lee, from Aberdeen, made his first appearance here, playing Sir Charles Marlow, while Miss Rock took the part of Miss Hardcastle. On November 27th,

* From a letter in the *Scotsman* we learn that the charges for benefit nights at this time were as follows:—Thursdays and Fridays, £35; Monday, £40; Tuesday, £45; and Saturdays, £52.

Hallowe'en ; or, The Vampire and the Water-Kelpie, a melancholy melodrama from the English Opera House, was brought out with some success; while the production on December 5th of *William Wallace*, with Terry in the title rôle, lasted out a dozen nights.

The production of the fourth of the series of Waverley dramas—*The Antiquary ; or, The Heir of Glen Allan*—also proved a great success. It was the joint work of Terry and Pocock, with some additions from the novel; the music was by Bishop, the scenery by Grieves and Roberts, and it was first played here on December 20th. The cast was as follows:—Earl of Glenallan = Anderson; Sir Arthur Wardour = Roberts; Jonathan Oldbuck = W. Murray; MacIntyre = Jones; Lovel = Calcraft; Caxon = Duff; Francis M'Craw = Bell; Saunders Mucklebackit = Denham; Edie Ochiltree = Mackay; Miss Wardour = Miss Rock; Miss Maria MacIntyre = Miss M. Nicol; Miss Grizelda Oldbuck = Mrs Nicol; Jenny = Miss Nicol; Elspeth = Mrs Renaud.

It ran consecutively for twenty-two nights, and again some twelve times during the continuance of the season.

On February 28th *Rob Roy* was played, with Calcraft as the bold chieftain, Miss Rock as Diana, Weekes (who had joined on the 12th) as Major Galbraith, and Murray as Captain Thornton. On March 10th *Rob Roy* was announced to be played for the ninetieth time since its production in the Royal.

Some time during this season Alexander was appointed manager of the Carlisle Theatre; an appointment which could not have interfered with his duties in Edinburgh, as the Carlisle Theatre seems only to have been open during the summer months, when, of course, he could easily absent himself. On the strength of his new appointment Alexander wrote to Murray asking for a rise of 10s. a week, his salary being at the time £2, 10s. Murray did not accede to this request, and some ill feeling and a great deal of misunderstanding seems to have arisen between the two. It resulted at length in an open altercation upon the stage, and Murray refused to allow Alexander his annual benefit. The latter, however, engaged the Pantheon Theatre, and had his "night" there instead, and afterwards left the east to commence his long career of management in the west—management which, it may safely be said, did almost as much for the drama there as Murray did for it here.

Several melo-dramas which were produced this season enjoyed long runs, and the season came to a close on June 11th (1821) to reopen on

the 30th of July for the summer months. Not much, however, falls to be recorded between the latter date and September 15th, when the summer season closed. Miss Dance, from Covent Garden, made her first appearance in Edinburgh on the opening night, playing Juliet to Calcraft's Romeo, and several English operas were well put on the stage, with Miss Wilson, Mr Horn, Mr Isaacs, and Mr Huckel. On August 25th, the "National Opera" of *David Rizzio*, from Drury Lane, was produced, and on the 31st, a magnificent spectacle of the coronation was introduced into the second part of *King Henry IV.* This ran to the closing on September 15th, and was again put on when the Theatre opened for the winter season on October 22nd, when it held the boards until November 7th, after which the house closed until the 17th. On that evening *Monsieur Tonson*, which Genest describes as a poor farce, was played for the first time in Edinburgh, and during the season was included some forty times in the bills. The scenery was by David Roberts; Calcraft played Monsieur Morblieu; Murray, Nap; and Miss Nicol, Adolphine.

A new comic pantomime was produced on January 21st, under the direction of William Barrymore; and on March 4th, Calcraft being ill, Terry acted Rob Roy.

The Legend of Montrose, or the Children of the Mist, arranged for the stage by John Pocock, was produced on March 13th 1822. The music was chiefly selected from the ancient melodies of Scotland; the scenery was painted by David Roberts, the views of Inverary Castle and Loch Lochy being copied by permission from original sketches by Alexander Nasmyth. The cast was as follows:—James Graham, Earl of Montrose = C. Mason; the Earl of Menteith = Huckel; Angus M'Aulay = Roberts; Allan M'Aulay = Calcraft; Captain Dugald Dalgetty = Mackay; Marquis of Argyle = Denham; Sir Duncan Campbell = Faulkner; Ranald = Terry; Annot Lyle = Miss Rock; Erorcht = Mrs Renaud. This, the fifth of the series, was not so successful as its predecessors, as its first run only extended to eleven nights.

On April 1st, Charles Kemble paid his first visit for many years, and on the 20th Anderson took his farewell benefit.

Calcraft, for his benefit on May 1st, produced another Waverley drama from his own pen. This was *The Bride of Lammermoor*. It was licensed "expressly for this Theatre," and, although only played once at this time, afterwards became exceedingly popular. Calcraft himself played Edgar, while the other parts were cast as follows:—Sir William Ashton =

Faulkner ; Colonel Ashton = C. Mason ; Frank Hayston = Jones ; Craig-engelt = Murray ; Caleb Balderston = Mackay ; Randolph = Roberts ; Norman = Duff ; Lockhart = Denham ; Lucy Ashton = Mrs H. Siddons ; Lady Ashton = Mrs Faulkner ; Mysie = Mrs Nicol ; Alice Gray = Mrs Renaud.

Another version of *Guy Mannering*, called the *Witch of Duncleuch*, was produced on May 25th, when Mr and Mrs Bartley, who were starring here at the time, played the parts of Dirk Hatterick and Meg Merilees.

The season closed on June 8th.



THEATRE-ROYAL, EDINBURGH.

BY COMMAND
OF
HIS MAJESTY.

This present Evening, **TUESDAY, August 27. 1822,**

Will be performed the National Opera of

ROB ROY MACGREGOR,
OR
AULD LANGSYNE.

WITH THE ORIGINAL MUSIC, AND APPROPRIATE SCENERY, MACHINERY, DRESSES AND DECORATIONS.

Sir Frederick Vernon by Mr MUNRO,
Rashleigh Osbaldiston by Mr DENHAM—Francis Osbaldiston by Mr HUCKEL,
Captain Thornton by Mr MURRAY—Major Galbraith by Mr WEEKES,
Rob Roy Macgregor Campbell by Mr CALCRAFT,
Bailie Nicol Jarvie by Mr MACKAY,
Mr Owen by Mr ROBERTS—MacStewart by Mr LEE—Dougal by Mr DUFF,
Willie by Master HILLYARD—Andrew by Mr AIKIN—Lancie by Mr STANLEY,
Sergeant by Mr HILLYARD—Saunders Wylie by Mr POWER,
English Soldiers by Messrs Broadhurst, Sandilands, Robertson, Hewson, Cameron, Plover, Merryck, Glegg, Norman, &c. &c.
Travellers by Messrs Field, Lylesford, Brodie, Dunstable, Eccles, Fotheringham, Gessner, Kerry, Larder, Stormount, &c.
Lennox Troopers by Messrs Grant, Heath, Thomson, Reid, Chisholm, Robb, and Rutherford,
English Soldiers by Messrs Lawson, Lorimer, Reinard, Charteris, Belsham, Orrock, Blenheim, Burgess, Lennox, Cross, &c.
Helen Macgregor by Mrs RENAUD,
Martha by Miss J. NICOL—Mattie by Miss NICOL—Hostess by Mrs MACKAY—Jean M'Alpine by Mrs NICOL,
Diana Vernon, for this Night only, by Mrs H. SIDDONS.

THE SCENERY WILL BE EXHIBITED IN THE FOLLOWING SUCCESSION:

ACT THE FIRST.

1. INTERIOR OF VILLAGE INN.
- LIBRARY IN OSBALDISTON HALL.
3. ROOM IN BAILIE NICOL JARVIE'S.
4. THE OLD BRIDGE OF GLASGOW.
5. HALL IN GLASGOW TOLBOOTH.
6. CELL IN THE TOLBOOTH OF GLASGOW.

ACT THE SECOND.

1. THE COLLEGE GARDENS OF GLASGOW,
AND VIEW OF THE SPIRE OF ST MUNGO.
2. LIBRARY IN OSBALDISTON HALL.
3. INTERIOR OF JEAN M'ALPINE'S CHANGE HOUSE.
4. THE CLACHAN OF ABERFOYLE,
AND DISTANT VIEW OF THE HIGHLAND LOCH.

ACT THE THIRD.

1. THE PASS OF LOCHARD.
2. ROMANTIC GLEN IN THE HIGHLANDS.

3. INTERIOR OF JEAN M'ALPINE'S CHANGE HOUSE.
4. VIEW OF LOCHLOMOND, MOONLIGHT.

No Free Admission can be granted on the present Occasion, Returners and Subscribers to the Theatre excepted.

The Pit and Gallery Doors will this Evening Open at Six o'Clock—The Box Door will Open at half past Six precisely; and the Time appointed for the Commencement of the Performances is Eight o'Clock—It is therefore most earnestly and respectfully requested, that Ladies and Gentlemen will be early in their Attendance.

The Transfer Office will not be Opened this Evening, as, the moment that the Pit and Galleries are filled, Placards will be issued, notifying the same, and should any Lady or Gentleman taking a Ticket for the Pit be too late in securing Admittance, their Money will be returned on Production of the Ticket To-Morrow Morning, at the Box-Office.

No Money will be taken at the Box Entrance until the Tickets issued for this Evening are received.

All Carriages will set down with the Horses' Heads towards Waterloo Place, and take up in the Opposite Direction.

To-Morrow the Tragedy of *OTHELLO*—the Character of *Othello* by Mr KEAN.

It being his Last Appearance here but Three this Season.

VIVAT REX.

CHAPTER XVIII.

THE KING'S VISIT.



THE summer season of 1822 was destined to become memorable in the Annals of the Edinburgh Stage. It opened on July 1st with Mrs Bunn, late Miss Somerville, as the chief attraction.

On the following evening was produced Tom Dibdin's version of *Kenilworth; or, the Merry Days of Old England*, with the following cast:—Earl of Leicester = Calcraft; Richard Varney = Monroe; Tressilian = Denham; Foster = Mackay; Mike Lambourne = Jones; Giles Gosling = Weekes; Wayland = Duff; Master Lawrence Goldthread = Huckel; Queen Elizabeth = Mrs Bunn; Amy = Mrs H. Siddons; Janet Foster = Miss Nicol; Nicolas Blount = Murray.

This adaptation does not seem to have taken well, and only ran six nights; but it was occasionally played afterwards. On July 31st Miss M. Tree made her first appearance in Edinburgh, on which occasion she sustained the part of Diana Vernon in *Rob Roy*.

About this time enormous crowds of people flocked into the town to view the preparations that were in progress for the reception of King George IV., who was expected to land in Scotland some time in August. The Theatre of course benefited by this, as hundreds of country people, to whom a Theatre Royal was a luxury but seldom enjoyed, were in the city. On the 14th August the Royal George yacht, with the King on board, arrived in Leith Roads, where, as is well known, the first man to go on deck was Sir Walter Scott. "What," said the King, when he heard who his visitor was, "Sir Walter Scott? the man in Scotland I most wish to see." After the performance in the Theatre that evening, the audience rose and sang "God Save the King," amid the wildest enthusiasm.

With the notable events that followed the King's landing on the follow-

ing day we have nothing to do here ; until the Royal visit to the Theatre on Tuesday, August 27th.

The event was really an important one, apart from its dramatic interest, for through it the Scottish people were brought into nearer contact with their Sovereign than the officialism that surrounded all his previous appearances had permitted. It was a gracious and politic action on the part of the King to command the play of *Rob Roy* on this occasion. It was a compliment to Sir Walter Scott, to the Scottish nation, and offended but one individual—Edmund Kean. Kean was playing a starring engagement at the time, and fully expected that the King would command a play that he could appear in ; such perhaps as *Macbeth*. George IV., however, never mentioned Kean's name, and so that individual felt much chagrined, and in his cups was probably the only man in Edinburgh who expressed disloyal sentiments. He eventually, however, put a good face on the matter by boasting that he “ had a King for his enemy ! ”

After the performances were finished on the night of the 26th, preparations were set on foot to have all in readiness for the proper reception of the King. A handsome portico was erected over the Royal entrance ; under this was laid a platform covered with crimson cloth ; this led to a pair of folding doors which opened into the old box office, now transformed into a handsome apartment, brilliant with lamps, which were reflected in immense pier glasses. This entrance hall had such an effect on one of the yeomen of the guard, who was in attendance, as to cause him to exclaim as he entered, “ Come, this beats Lunnon yet.” The remainder of the appointments were of the most gorgeous description, and, it is worthy of note, called forth an expression of unqualified approval from His Majesty.

At the Royal door all was order and ceremony ; not so at the pit and gallery entrance. There the crowd began to collect about noon, and by two o'clock was dense. As the doors did not open until six, this would have been bad enough, but the clerk of the weather, anxious to make himself remembered, turned on the taps and let the rain fall in a steady down-pour. Every one became saturated, while the steam ascending hovered over the crowd like a cloud. The worst part of all was to come, for when the doors were opened those who had waited longest to get in were lifted from their feet and carried about without being able to move a muscle to help themselves. The whole crowd became a great moving, whirling mass, ungovernable as the waves of the ocean. People who had come last were, in most cases, the first to get inside, and many who had

waited longest found themselves shot out into the tail of the crowd in almost no time. Very soon after six o'clock a board was displayed announcing that the house was filled ; but still the crowd thronged round the door, and several individuals, led by the example of a stout athletic Gael, contrived to mount on to the heads of the crowd and get in through the upper section of the door.

Inside the house the crush was intense, while matters were made infinitely worse by the cloud of steam that ascended from the saturated garments of those present. Good humour, however, prevailed, and Scotch songs were sung in chorus to pass the time away until the arrival, about 7.30, of the box occupants, by which time the atmosphere had become comparatively clear. In the boxes was assembled nearly every person of distinction and rank in the town at the time. At ten minutes past eight the King arrived, and was received at the door by the Lord Chamberlain and Mr Murray, each bearing silver candlesticks. When the King entered his box, the reception was enthusiastic in the extreme ; and when the cheering had subsided, the curtain rose, and "God Save the King" was sung by the whole *corps dramatique*, the audience standing and joining in the chorus. The actors on entering in their respective characters bowed to the King, and the play went on to the evident enjoyment of His Majesty, who laughed heartily at several of the incidents. In particular he seemed to enjoy Owen's precipitate retreat under the bed clothes, and the encounter with the "het poker," while at the Bailie's remark, "Nane o' your Lunnon tricks here," he is reported to have laughed outright. The performance passed off with great spirit, and at the conclusion "God Save the King" was called for and sung *con amore*. Amid a scene of wild enthusiasm the King retired, and before leaving the building complimented Mr Murray and thanked him for the treat he had received ; mentioning that he was much pleased at seeing his old favourite Mrs H. Siddons again.*

The cast of *Rob Roy* on this memorable occasion was as follows :—
 Sir Frederick Vernon = Munro ; Rashleigh Osbaldistane = Denham ;
 Francis Osbaldistane = Huckel ; Captain Thornton = Murray ; Major
 Galbraith = Weekes ; Rob Roy = Calcraft ; Bailie Nicol Jarvie = Mackay ;
 Owen = Roberts ; Macstewart = Lee ; Dougal = Duff ; Andrew Fairservice

* For most of the above particulars see a contemporary account of His Majesty's visit printed in book form.

= Aikin ; Helen Macgregor = Mrs Renaud ; Martha = Miss J. Nicol ; Mattie = Miss Nicol ; Hostess = Mrs Mackay ; Jean M'Alpine = Mrs Nicol ; and Diana Vernon = Mrs H. Siddons (for this night only).

The business done during the autumn was enormous, and the house remained open until November 2nd.

The winter season opened on November 16th with a performance of *She Stoops to Conquer* and the farce *Is he alive ?* The Theatre had been newly painted (pink and white) and decorated ; the curtain, formerly blue, was replaced by a new one of crimson, and a new drop scene was also added. The company was not so strong as that of the previous winter. Terry had left, and Bland succeeded Huckel in the vocal department ; Calcraft assumed undivided lead. Plays requiring more than one good tragic actor could not be got up, and apparently Calcraft either mis-doubted his own chance of success in tragedy, or else the management saw good reason for constantly bringing on melo-drama and eschewing more exacting pieces. Till after the New Year national dramas almost solely occupied the bills. All this was the subject of pretty free criticism in the pages of a little daily publication called the *Edinburgh Dramatic Review*, which had been started a few months previously. This paper complained of the inferior nature of the company and the class of plays produced, and hinted that the fault lay with the management paying insufficient salaries to the performers. It also threatened to publish a list of salaries paid by the Theatre. All this was much more than Murray could calmly bear, so he wrote to Mr Huie, the printer of the publication, to say that he considered such a "procedure an improper interference with the private concerns of the establishment," and in consequence withdrew the privilege he had till then accorded the paper of free admission to the Theatre.

This was answered by the editor of the *Dramatic Review* ; he referred Murray to the *London Magazine*, where there was a precedent in the current issue for publishing actors' salaries. Murray had said to do so would be "insulting to the performers," to which the editor retaliated by saying, that if that was the case the salaries must be miserably inadequate. Murray instead of replying returned the letter to Mr Huie, and declined all correspondence with the editor. Such a challenge to battle the latter gentleman accepted *con amore*, and for many months stuck as many thorns in the manager's side as he could cram into three octavo sheets of small type daily. The first one—and it was

sharp—was the threatened list of salaries. It must certainly have proved “insulting to the performers” and exceedingly annoying to the management, for it clearly showed that either the company was unfit for such a Theatre, or else Murray was not paying them a fair remuneration for their services. The latter in many cases was undoubtedly the correct conclusion to arrive at. Mason was shamefully underpaid at £2 a week, the same was true of Denham and Boddie at 30s. each, Mrs Nicol at £2, Miss J. Nicol at 15s. ; and when we consider how indispensable Mackay was in all Scotch plays, it cannot be said that £4 a week was liberal remuneration for his own and wife’s services ! Calcraft had three guineas a week, perhaps enough for him, but not by any means an adequate salary for a first leading man. The other salaries were given as follows:—Jones, four guineas ; Weekes, three guineas ; Faulkner, £2, 12s. 6d. ; Duff, two guineas ; Lee, 30s. ; Bland, £2 ; Hillyard, 25s. ; Aikin, 21s. ; Power, 15s. ; Mrs Renaud, three guineas ; Mrs Eyre, £2 ; Miss Nicol, 25s. ; Miss Eyre, 15s. ; Miss Halford, £2 ; and Miss M. Nicol, 30s. ; or in all scarcely £45 per week. This list of salaries was soon followed up by the publication of an estimate of the average receipts and the expenditure of the Theatre. The table, most elaborately worked out, showed in an average season of thirty-five weeks a total income,—at £60 for the average nightly draw—of £12,600 ; expenses, £6,930 ; leaving a clear profit of £5,670. In the expenses was set down a sum of £2,200 for rent, but this was a mistake ; Mrs Siddons was in reality paying the purchase money of the property by instalments, and had at that date about £28,000 paid up. Murray had no resource left but to reply to the statement. Had he remained silent, the public must have concluded, not that he would not, but that he could not do so. His reply was addressed to the editor of the *Weekly Journal*, but instead of giving the lie direct to the *Dramatic Review*, or making out a correct income and expenditure account, he went somewhat out of his way to quote the statement he himself made in 1815,* and said that, after paying off the debt of £3,100 then standing, Mrs Siddons had only made a clear profit of £900, besides drawing a weekly salary of £12 ! Murray’s best and most dignified course would have been simply to deny the correctness of the *Dramatic Review’s* statement. But the method he adopted cannot have satisfied the town, and only laid him more open to attack—an advantage which his antagonist was not slow to

* See page 270.

make full use of. Murray did not deny that £60 was a fair average nightly drawing, nor that the estimate of expenditure was underrated. He merely stated that during seven years the gross profit had amounted to only £4,000, altogether ignoring the fact—which the *Dramatic Review* had overlooked—that the item of £2,000 was not paid away for rent, but invested, and should rightly have been considered as profit. One portion of his 1815 speech he also ignored. It was where he estimated the expenditure of the Theatre at £160 a week. That for seven weeks would amount to £1120. Now, Mr Murray in his reply allows that he drew £4069 during the run of *Rob Roy* in 1819—seven weeks in all; deduct expenses for that period, as above, and we have £2949 profit. He also mentions £1500 as the amount drawn during the engagement of Miss Stephens for two weeks. The profit at the same rate would be £1,120, or total profit in nine weeks £4,129 more than he said was made during the whole seven years. Of course these calculations are based upon the supposition, which Murray did not deny, that £60 was a fair nightly average during the season. The *Dramatic Review* estimated the expenditure at considerably more than £160 per week, and, of course, very large sums were spent occasionally during each season on new productions, spectacles, pantomimes, &c. Murray offered to show his books to the editor of the *Weekly Journal*, or to any three gentlemen the assignees of the patent might be pleased to appoint; notwithstanding which, and allowing a good deal on both sides, it seems pretty clear either that Murray was telling the truth, but not the whole truth, or else that his system of management was very extravagant in all save salaries. One interesting fact was brought to light by this controversy, namely, that Murray's salary was £4 per week, with an allowance of £100 per year "for any additional fatigue my duties of manager may cast upon me!" The only other result worth noting was the publication of "An Address to the Public," by John William Calcraft, in which the author stoutly maintains the excellence of his own acting in opposition to the pretty freely expressed views of the *Dramatic Review*, and takes up the cudgels in defence of the management. As already stated, the boards of the Theatre were almost exclusively occupied during the first two months of the season by melo-dramas and national plays. On December 13th, however, *Douglas* was acted, with Glenalvon by "A Gentleman," who, on his second appearance, proved to be a Mr Butler. On January 6th, Vandenhoff, "the best actor out of London," as he was then generally reckoned, appeared as Coriolanus, so that with this

addition the company could no longer be called weak. As a matter of fact, excellent plays were put on ; and, according to the notices, even in the hyper-critical *Dramatic Review*, were well played. Vandenhoff, who was born in 1790,* had been, for some years previous to his Edinburgh engagement, playing in Liverpool, where he was a prodigious favourite. The playgoers of that town would, in fact, allow no rival to supplant him in their estimation. After leaving Edinburgh, Vandenhoff went to London, where, for many years, both at Covent Garden and Drury Lane, he maintained his position as a first rate actor of great attainments, although scarcely to be reckoned as a genius.†

Tom and Jerry dramatised, was produced on December 26th 1822. More than a year before it had been an enormous success in London, and in Edinburgh the public never seemed to tire of it.‡ It contained, in fact, what in all successful pieces of its class is the element of success, namely, no plot, smart action and dialogue, with no more wit than an average audience could understand, and a certain suggestion of naughtiness that is specially dear to the heart of occasional playgoers. Murray was evidently well versed in catering for this variable quantity in his audiences, for he advertised that all the objectionable pieces had been suppressed, thereby plainly implying the nature of the play.

On January 16th 1823, the company was still further strengthened by the addition of Pritchard, from the York circuit, an actor who occupied the position of lead in Edinburgh for many years after ; and on the 6th of February the management played another of those trump cards of which, thanks to the genius of Sir Walter Scott, they held such a hand, and knew so well when and how to play. This time it was *George Heriot*. A contemporary print congratulates "the theatrical public of Edinburgh on another ray of splendour having been added to the great national sun of attraction which, from time to time, has beamed forth from the pen of the immortal unknown."

This version of the play was "licensed for representation by the Right Hon. the Lord Chamberlain," but the adapter's name was not published ; whoever he was, he made an excellent job of it, and the play, after being performed eighteen times during the season, became a stock

* He died in 1861.

† See Old Drury Lane, Stirling, vol. ii., p. 167.

‡ It was played some thirty-six times at the Theatre Royal, and oftener at the minor Theatre.

favourite, and was highly approved of by Sir Walter Scott. Murray* was a great success in the title rôle, and Mason, it is said, made a remarkable hit as Trapbois. The remainder of the cast was as follows :—James I. = Denham ; Buckingham = Gordon ; Nigel = Pritchard ; Lord Dalgarno = Calcraft ; Richie Moniplies = Mackay ; Jacob, “ Duke ” of Alsatia, = Weekes ; Hempseed = Ebsworth ; Lady Hermione = Mrs Eyre ; Mistress Margaret Ramsay = Mrs H. Siddons ; Martha Trapbois = Mrs Renaud ; Mrs Suddlechop = Mrs Nicol.

On March 8th Young, the tragedian, commenced a short engagement, his first play being *Merchant of Venice*. Shylock = Young ; Portia = Mrs H. Siddons, one of her best parts ; and on the 24th of the same month Liston opened in *She Stoops to Conquer*, playing Tony Lumpkin ; Miss Halford appearing as Miss Hardcastle, in consequence of Mrs H. Siddons being indisposed. During his engagement Liston gave a performance of *Dominie Sampson* (April 2nd), which aroused much interest in the minds of playgoers. Liston, it is well known, was the *original* Dominie, and with London audiences was every bit as popular as Mackay could boast of being in Edinburgh. We have the supreme authority of the “ Great Unknown,” however, for pronouncing in favour of Mackay being the better exponent of such characters ; at the same time it should be recollected, Mackay’s interpretations were better adapted for Scotsmen—as a Londoner could not appreciate his peculiar dryness of humour.

On April 12th another “ Waverley ” drama first saw the light. *Peveril of the Peak* was termed in the bills “ a melo-dramatic play in three acts, originally produced at the Surrey Theatre in London, and now, with several alterations and additions from the novel, licensed for representation at this Theatre by the Right Hon. the Lord Chamberlain.” The “ vocal and melo-dramatic music ” was composed by James Dewar and Ware of the Theatre Royal, Covent Garden. The cast was as follows :—Charles II. = Denham ; Buckingham = Pritchard ; Sir Geoffrèy Peveril = Mackay ; Topham = Mason ; Lance Outram = Murray ; Mathew Chamberlain = Weekes ; Christian = Calcraft ; Bertram = Duff ; Countess of Derby = Mrs Renaud ; Lady Peveril = Mrs Eyre ; Deborah Debbitch = Miss Nicol ; Dame Ellesmere = Mrs Nicol.

* On February 25th Murray was suddenly taken ill, and Vandenhoff acted his part successfully at a few hours’ notice.

Yet two more of the Waverley series were to appear before the season closed. The first was, *Battle of Bothwell Bridge*, licensed expressly for this Theatre, and performed on May 3rd for the benefit of Calcraft, who, in all probability, was himself the adapter. It was not reproduced during the season, but in after years attained considerable popularity. The other was *Ivanhoe* on May 19th, for the benefit of Miss Halford, the version being that played at Covent Garden, and it was only performed on this occasion.

The summer season included a visit from Miss M. Tree and Madam Vestris. What was termed an "after" season was given to allow Miss Paton and Horn to appear in a round of English operas. On October 11th, between the play and farce, Murray addressed the audience; thanking them for their support during the fourteen years which the management had just completed, and, on its part, promising great things in the future.

The winter season 1823-4 opened on the evening of Saturday, November 1st, with the comedy of the *Poor Gentleman*, and a new melodramatic romance, *The Father and the Son*. Considerable improvements had been made in the auditorium during the recess. A new gas-lustre had been put in, which, according to a contemporary print, greatly subdued the glare of the gas. Every *alternate* seat in the pit had a back added to it; and a new drop curtain from the brush of Roberts was displayed. The first month's performances included a revival of *George Heriot*, while three new members of the company were introduced, namely, Wynn—no great acquisition apparently—Brough—a capital bass vocalist—and Lynch—who ably filled the Irish parts, left vacant by the departure of Weekes.

On the 24th November a new version of *Ivanhoe* was produced. It was a compilation by Murray, made up of detached scenes and speeches from the Covent Garden adaptation of that name, from *Rebecca, or the Jew's Daughter*, produced at the Surrey, and from Calcraft's *Ivanhoe*. It was announced as being licensed for "this Theatre;" the music was by Bishop, arranged by Dewar, and the scenery was by Pyett and David Roberts of Drury Lane, and Hillyard and Bonar of Edinburgh. It proved a hit, and ran for seventeen nights in succession. *Normans*:—Prince John of Anjou = Smith; Sir Lucas = Faulkner; Sir Brian de Bois Guilbert = Calcraft; Sir Reginald Front de Bœuf = Denham; Sir Maurice de Bracey = Wynn; The Prior Aymer = Stanley; Herald = Hill-

yard. *Saxons*.—Cedric = Lynch; Ivanhoe = Pritchard; Wamba = Murray; Oswald = Duff; Page = Miss Murray; Rowena = Miss Halford; Ulrica = Mrs Renaud; Elgitha = Miss J. Nicol. *The Merry Men of Sherwood Forest*.—Robin Hood = Bing; Little John = Brough; Scarlet = R. Power; Friar Tuck = Mackay. *Jews*.—Isaac = Mason; Rebecca = Mrs H. Siddons.

On December 17th J. Russell, formerly low comedian in the Edinburgh company, commenced a short engagement; but, instead of appearing in parts suitable to his particular line, he committed the gross mistake of acting in a round of tragic characters, such as Sir Giles, in *New Way to Pay Old Debts* (December 17th), Richard III. (December 18th), and Shylock (December 19th). He seems to have been no better fitted for such parts than he was on the occasion of his benefit in 1815.*

Vandenhoff made his first appearance for the season on December 22nd, playing Damon in *Damon and Pythias*, and continued during the greater portion of the season playing lead.

A melo-dramatic spectacle, entitled *The Cataract of the Ganges*, was produced on February 19th, in which it is worth noting that a company of equestrians, under the direction of a Mr Cooke, was engaged. On March 13th Young opened a twelve nights' engagement, by playing Benedick in *Much Ado About Nothing*.

A version of the *Pirate*, licensed for this Theatre, was brought out on Monday, March 29th, but was only played a very few times. Excepting the engagement of Charles Kemble (April 12th) and of Mrs Davison (late Miss Duncan) (April 26th), nothing occurred worth recording till May 22nd, when, on the occasion of Calcraft's benefit, was produced a new Historical and National Drama, licensed expressly for this Theatre, entitled *Waverley*, adapted from the novel. The music of the play by J. Dewar. Prince Charles Stuart = Jones; Baron of Bradwardine = Mackay; Fergus M'Ivor = Calcraft; Edward Waverley = Pritchard; Evan Maccombich = Denham; Bailie Macwheeble = Mason; Davie Gellatly = Miss Nicol; Laird of Balmawhapple = Murray; Flora M'Ivor = Mrs H. Siddons; Rose Bradwardine = Miss Halford; Mrs Flockhart = Mrs Nicol; with the song of "The Wolf," in character, by Mr Brough. The piece does not seem to have taken, and was only acted once again during the season. On June 5th (the last night) Murray took his benefit, when, in addition to a concert given by the members of the Edinburgh Professional Society of

* See p. 270.

Musicians, was produced Planché's adaptation of *St Ronan's Well*, with the following cast:—Francis Bulmer=Denham; Sir Bingo Binks=Stanley; Mr Francis Tyrrel=Pritchard; John Mowbray=Calcraft; Captain Jekyll=Jones; Peregrine Touchwood=Murray; Winterblossom=Mason; Captain O'Turk=Lynch; Lady Penelope Penfeather=Mrs Eyre; Lady Binks=Miss Eyre; Clara Mowbray=Mrs H. Siddons; Elspeth=Miss Murray; Meg Dodds, of St Ronan's Aulton, by Mackay, who, "for this night only, has kindly consented to attempt the character. At the end of the play Mr Mackay will, in the character of Meg Dodds, deliver an address written expressly for this occasion." It may be mentioned here that he pretty frequently repeated this character in one scene as an interlude.

After two extra benefits,* given during the interval between the winter and summer season, the latter opened on June 21st, with the *Barber of Seville*, in which Miss Paton appeared as Rosina, supported by Bing as Fiorella, Mackay as Dr Bartolo, Mason as Basil, and Murray as Figaro. English opera continued in the programmes till July 4th, on the evening of which day Wallack was announced to make his first appearance in this city,† the play being *Pizarro*, in which he played Rolla. English opera again occupied the bills from July 12th, when Horn and Miss Stephens appeared, and on August 2nd and 3rd Mrs Bunn acted Isabella in the play of the same name, and Elizabeth in *Kenilworth*. Sinclair followed in a round of tenor parts, and was joined by Miss M. Tree on August 6th. This concluded the list of attractions for the season, which closed on August 21st.

The season 1824-5 was opened on 13th November with a performance of *She Stoops to Conquer*, under the patronage of the stewards and directors of the Edinburgh Musical Festival, and five nights later there was given the first of three benefits in aid of the sufferers from the "late calamitous fire" in Parliament Square. The first novelty was the re-appearance of the child actress, Miss Clara Fisher, now thirteen years old, in such parts as Richard III. and Young Norval. On 22nd December a remarkable singer, of the name of Thorne, made his first appearance in Edinburgh. This gentleman is described by living witnesses of his performances as possessing a robust tenor voice of

* One on June 12th was for Mrs Cummins, who had incurred great expense in coming North to attend on her husband (the Theatre Prompter) during his last illness.

† It is questionable if this is correct. See p. 217.

great range. The latter quality must have stood him in good stead, for besides filling all the principal tenor rôles, he was in the habit of taking the counter-tenor parts in glees, and not unfrequently he sang such songs as "The Wolf" and "What is Title?" which, to prevent any misunderstanding arising as to whether they were transposed to suit a tenor vocalist, are specially mentioned in the playbills as "bass songs!" It is most likely, however, that Thorne was a bass, and that he used falsetto to a great extent. The following extract from "Dramatic Life as I found it," by N. M. Ludlow, St Louis, 1880 (page 558), corroborates this view of the case:—

"Mr James Thorne was born in England about the year 1800, and made his first appearance at Drury Lane in 1819, as Florian in *The Devil's Bridge*. He came to America in the summer of 1830, and made his first appearance at the Park Theatre, New York, on the 8th of November 1830, as Count Belino in *The Devil's Bridge*. He was announced as from the English Opera House. Mr Thorne's selection for his first appearance was a most unfortunate one, and gave but little promise of the merit he afterwards displayed. The part was unsuited to his voice, which was a fine baritone, or, I should say, basso, of great power and smoothness, and well adapted to the range of many characters in which he subsequently gave great pleasure: in *Figaro*, *Baron Pompolino*, *Caliban*, *Gabriel* in *Guy Mannering*, and other similar parts. He last appeared in New York in 1834. He was with me at Louisville in 1831, afterwards in St Louis in 1838-9 and 1842. He was a manager at one time with J. R. Scott, and performed in Cincinnati and other Western theatres. He died at sea, when on his voyage from New Orleans to England, in the summer of 1843, aged about 43 years."

Vandenhoff joined the company on 27th December, and played throughout the season a large selection of parts in standard tragedies. Two nights after his appearance (29th December), *Der Freischütz* was presented for the first time to an Edinburgh audience. It was splendidly produced, under the direction of Mr Hawes "of the king's chapel," and had a run of some twenty-one nights. Thorne was the Rudolph, and gave a fine performance; Pritchard *spoke* the part of Caspar; but the most interesting item in the cast was the appearance of Miss Noel as Agnes. This was her first introduction to Edinburgh audiences, with whom she remained a sterling favourite for many years. Among her keenest admirers was Professor Wilson, who, in the *Noctes Ambrosianæ*, of immortal fame, more than once speaks with enthusiasm of her abilities. The following passage is sufficient to quote:—

"*North*.—It is many years, James, since I have been so much pleased with any one's singing as with Miss Noel's. She is a sweet, gentle, modest creature, and her pipe has both power and pathos.

“*Shepherd*.—She is just ane o’ the verra best singers I ever heard in a’ my life; and the proof o’t is, that, although an English lassie, she can sing sweetly a Scottish sang. That tries the heart at ance, you see, Mr North; and unless the singer be innocent and amiable, and fu’ o’ natural sensibility, such as a faither wad like in his ain dochter, she needna try ane o’ our lyrics. Here’s Miss Noel’s health, and a’ that’s gude to her!” (June 1826.)

The simple, natural manner of her rendering of Scottish songs noticed by the “*Shepherd*,” was the result of careful tuition and coaching, from Mackay for the Doric, and Dewar for the vocalisation.

On January 21st, *Rob Roy* was given, with Pritchard in the title rôle, for the first time on any stage; Calcraft being away, the part in common with many others termed “second lead,” devolved upon Pritchard in natural course. On the same evening Miss Noel made her first appearance in Edinburgh as Diana Vernon. Several interesting Shaksperian revivals took place this spring, including *Winter’s Tale*, *Coriolanus*, *King Henry V.*, and *The Tempest*. In the last named Vandenhoff played Prospero and Miss Noel, Ariel, her first appearance in the part; Thorne played Caliban. On March 12th, *Othello*, with Young’s Iago to Vandenhoff’s Moor. Young followed this up with a number of Shaksperian parts, until he was succeeded by Liston as the “star” attraction on March 28th. On May 23rd commenced a series of Waverley Drama productions, the first being *The Rose of Ettrick Vale*. The Stranger = Pritchard; Old Adam of Teviot = Murray; Albert = Mortimer; Guy o’ th’ Gap = Lynch; Glenbrae = Thorne; Wandering Steenie = Denham; Brand o’ th’ Brae = Stanley; Black Wylie = Rae; Fergus = Harrold; Laurette, the Rose of Ettrick Vale = Mrs H. Siddons; Jessy = Miss Noel; Amy = Miss Dyer. The next was on the 28th, when, for Murray’s benefit, and very probably from his own pen, was produced *Redgauntlet*, for the “first time in any theatre.” This was an excellent play, and kept the stage; besides which it afforded Mackay, in Peter Peebles, what was, by many good judges, pronounced to be that actor’s best part. Prince Charles Edward = Denham; Sir Richard Glendall = Harrold; Mr Maxwell = Lee; General Campbell = Lynch; Redgauntlet = Pritchard; Daisey Latimer = Thorne; Justice Foxley = Mason; Joshua Geddes = Murray; Peter Peebles = Mackay; Crackenthorpe = Anderson; Cristal Nixon = Rae; Mr Nicholas = Miller; Mabel = Miss J. Nicol; Liliass = Miss Noel. The *Recluse* followed for Denham’s benefit, but turned out a failure. The *Talisman*, produced June 22nd, ran sixteen nights, but did not long remain a favourite. Mackay

had no part in it. The cast was as follows :—Richard I. = Pritchard ; Philip, King of France = Lynch ; Leopold, Archduke of Austria = Harrold ; Conrade = Rae ; Giles, Amoury Grandmaster = Denham ; Sir Thomas de Vaux = Mason ; Sir Henry Neville = Lee ; Sir Kenneth of Scotland = Murray ; Jonas Schwanker = Miller ; His Spruch Sprecher = Anderson ; Long Allen = Aikin ; Tomalin Blacklees = Power ; Adonbec El Hakim = Jones ; Berengaria, Queen of England = Miss Mason ; Edith of Plantagenet = Mrs H. Siddons ; Calista = Miss Dyer. On July 4th, while the *Talisman* was still running, *Mary Stuart* was produced as an after piece, and ran for six nights. The season closed on the 9th. *Mary Stuart* continued a favourite as long as there were stock companies to play it, and almost every Scottish comedian has played Sandy Macfarlane in his time. In 1831, the celebrated Miss Foote produced it with remarkable success at the London Olympic. Lacy, in his acting edition of the piece, states Murray was the author. The original cast in Edinburgh was as follows :—Lord Lyndsay = Lynch ; Lord Ruthven = Harrold ; Sir Robert Melville = Lee ; George Douglas = Pritchard ; Roland = Murray ; Sandy Macfarlane = Mackay ; Jasper Dryfesdale = Denham ; Mary Stuart = Mrs H. Siddons ; Margaret Douglas = Mrs Renaud ; Catherine Seyton = Miss Dyer ; The Lady Fleming = Miss Johnson ; Mattie = Miss J. Nicol ; Maggie = Miss Rae ; Jenny = Miss Murray.

The summer season opened with the appearance of Miss Ellen Tree and her sister Miss Annie Tree in the *Wonder* and the *Barber of Seville*, on July 18th. On the 8th of August a Mr Sapio appeared as Henry Bertram, singing “Oft in the Stilly Night,” which in the bills is described as a “Scotch melody by Moore.” Both the *Talisman* and *Mary Stuart* were revived, and *Der Freischütz*, the opera, was played on the same evening, with *Der Fryshot*, a burlesque. Benson Hill, speaking of this piece, called it “that clever Travestie ; it showed us Murray and Thorne to great advantage, especially in their ‘Nid Noddin’ quadrille. This season closed on August 13th ; but a short after season, for the purpose of introducing the celebrated Miss Foote* to the Edinburgh audience, was opened on October 3rd. During this lady’s engagement a number of sterling comedies were produced, and on the 17th Miss Stephens, supported by Mr Thorne, succeeded for a few evenings.

The winter season opened on November 12th 1825, the Theatre

* Became Countess of Harrington.

being advertised as entirely repainted and decorated by Messrs Nicholson & Hay. It must be allowed that among Murray's many good points as a manager, his attention to the comfort of the audience was prominent; and, although according to modern notions his Theatre might not have seemed very luxuriously appointed; for a provincial theatre at that time, there is little doubt it took a first place. The opening piece was *Barber of Seville*, and on the Monday,* Benson Hill, a paid-off artillery officer, made his *debut* in *The Rivals*. He was apparently an actor of moderate merit, his particular line being light comedy, juvenile parts, and also French and Irish characters. He was a bachelor, and perhaps on that account had more of the element of discontent in his nature than was good for him; he wrote one or two books, and always speaks as if he considered he had been kept back in his adopted profession. Although his performances on the stage in Edinburgh were of minor importance, some of his remarks on the Theatre are very interesting, and will be quoted at length as occasion serves. On page 62 of his book entitled "Playing About," he says:—

"I now presented myself to Mr William Murray, my professional commandant. 'A man having authority' must be excused if, with strangers, he is somewhat dignified. We arranged for my opening in *Sir Lucius*. I took my sister to the Theatre, a plain little house. Its manager was Zabone in 'Abon Hassan'; a rich piece of humour. The audience, too, amused us. Every evening before the performances commence there, the air of our National Anthem is played, and received with the customary marks of respect. The gods, knowing this, as soon as the musicians enter the orchestra, call out—'Feddlers! God Save the King!' When it begins, they shout to their fellow spectators, 'Stand oop!' and at its close, 'Sit down!' Then laugh over and applaud their own monotonous 'wit,' though to the actors they are rather coldly attentive."

After speaking in a sadly ungallant manner of some of the lady members of the company, Hill continues:—

"One of the Company piqued himself on having been the original representative of several among Sir Walter's heroes. Nature had partly fitted him for two. He had Rob Roy's arms, and Balfour's eyes. For this puritan he wore Cœur-de-lion chain armour, and sported silver mounted pistols in Macduff."

The first production of importance this season was *Paul Pry*, November 21st. Murray, as the hero, was said by many good judges to have been quite equal to Liston, the original exponent of the part, and the cast other-

* Murray's seasons generally commenced on Saturdays.

wise was unquestionably good ; it took so well that it ran that season twenty-eight times, and was played constantly afterwards during the whole time of Murray's managership. Benson Hill mentions it as follows :—

“ *Paul Pry* came out. Murray was more like the mercurial Marplot, than Poole's hero, who is curious in sheer idleness ; yet the Edinburgh comedian was extremely ludicrous in his Cockney ‘ ‘opes ’ expressed to Colonel ‘ ‘Ardy.’ I told him Liston's umbrella gag, as a droll way of giving out ; the piece made a hit.”

The cast was as follows :—Colonel Hardy = Mackay ; Frank Hardy = Benson Hill ; Mr Witherton = Denham ; Somers (*alias* Willis) = Harold ; Mr Stanley = Lynch ; Harry Stanley = Pritchard ; Mr Paul Pry = Murray ; Doubledot = Villars ; Simon = Rae ; Eliza Hardy = Mrs Brudenell ; Marian = Miss Mason ; Phœbe = Miss Noel.

On the 28th November, Macready, after an absence of some years, again made his appearance before an Edinburgh audience, playing during his engagement in a round of well-known tragedies. On the 30th he produced *William Tell*, being its first performance here, and on December roth he played *Rob Roy*. * The following is from Benson Hill's “ Playing About ” :—

“ Mr Macready was rehearsing Cardinal Wolsey ; a Mr Harold had to personate the Duke of Norfolk, who has a speech beginning,—

‘ Then that in all you writ to Rome, or else
To Foreign Princes,—

which this poor boy followed up by saying,

‘ Ego and Rex meus
Was still inscribed.’

“ I called him aside and said, ‘ Though in your part nothing may be written as *and* but the Pussy, as children say, yet speak the Latin word, as in *et cetera*, you know.’

“ He promised to remember this, but, at night, to the erudite Macready's disgust, uttered,—

‘ Ego *and—et* Rex meus ! ’ ”

In another place he relates :—

“ While Darby (Mackay) and myself were on the stage, some drunkards, in the boxes, threw oranges—I imagined at me, for my companion was an established favourite. I, however, bowed, and continued to face the pelters. Their next aim was unmistakably at Mackay. He stood firm as a milestone, and *thanked the gentlemen*, in tones of ginger-grating scorn. We had heard a brief, abrupt exclamation, behind the scenes ; we now *saw*, and the offenders *felt* its cause. Thump ! Whack ! By the blood of the Murrays, our zealous little manager had rushed up to the disgraced part of his Theatre, and vigorously flooring these unprovoked

* His original part at Covent Garden, 1818.

ruffians, had them carried off to durance vile. The decent portion of the audience applauded him and us; we finished our scene; when we came off Mr Murray clamoured at me, 'My dear sir, that you, who have driven the French before you, sword in hand, with Charge bayonets, should live thus to be insulted by shop boys.' Though truly grateful, I undeceived him as to the duties required of an artillery officer."

A visit of Mathews, commencing December 12th, is notable from the fact of the famous comedian's son, Charles James, accompanying him. Mathews junr. was at that time a promising young architect, and had gained a wide reputation in the best society for being an excellent companion. His only connection with the stage at this time was in writing verses for his father's entertainments. The following letter from his pen, although not quite bearing on the present subject, is interesting enough not to require an apology for insertion:—

"Charles J. Mathews to Mrs Mathews.

"Pontblyddyn, January 20th 1826.

"MY DEAREST MA,—All things must have an end, and, therefore, at last my routings, and tearings, and hurryings, and flurryings have come to a stop, and here I am once more quietly seated in my Ferme Ornée. My father, being rather of a sedentary nature, contrived to send you a line or two from Abbotsford, but I found it impracticable. It wasn't that I was so completely occupied all the time, but I felt on the contrary a luxurious sort of do-nothingness about me from the moment I entered the gates. It was a quiet sort of enjoyment, far more delightful than any active pleasure, and I felt that I could do nothing but—do nothing. I tried to write a bit of the entertainment, but I could make nothing of it. I began a sketch, but gave it up before I had half completed it. I tried to read, but could not fix my attention. In short, I was fixed by some enchantment within the walls of the library, without the power of stirring from it. It is one of the most beautiful things of the kind I ever saw. It is in imitation of those fine old oak chambers that Sir Walter is so fond of describing in his works, with a bold groined ceiling, also of oak, very much enriched with carved pendants and bosses, studded with ornaments and grotesque figures selected from the Abbeys of Roslyn and Melrose. The bookcases are in the same character and material, and I fancy contain a pretty tolerable library. On the south side of the room is a very elegant oriel window, called oriel, of course, on account of its situation, breaking the room into one of those spacious and fanciful recesses that give such character to the architecture of the times. In one corner of the room I found several translations in French and Italian of the Waverley Novels, with his name to them. Next to this room, and separated by double doors, is the small study to which no one is allowed access but by his own desire. He took me into it, being an architect, to show me his comforts, and there I saw a mysterious sable black ebony bureau! doubtless, containing the steam-engine, loom, water-wheels, or whatever machinery it may be with which he manufactures the patent novels. I took particular notice of everything in the room, and, if he had left me there, should certainly have read all his notes. On the table and about the floor lay several volumes of the *Moniteur* and other French *journeaux* and pamphlets with which he is assisting himself in his 'Life of Bonaparte,' at least, as I conjectured, for he did not himself say anything about it. On the rug lay two thick, sturdy

MS. quartos, with blotting paper peeping out of each ; and I certainly would have given a shilling to have opened them only for one moment, but I did not attempt it, as I thought Sir Walter might think it rude, and I knew he was not a man to receive money for it, so I reluctantly abandoned the notion. Divided from the study by a corridor is the hall, or armoury, which is his particular hobby, and done under his own immediate direction, which is all I need say to convince you of its being quite perfect. All the rooms in the house, dining-room, drawing-room, &c., &c., are equally perfect in their peculiar styles. In short, all is enchantment where he is, and the whole house is a ‘Romance by the author of “Waverley.”’

“I have a good deal of commonplace discourse, which I must keep till Saturday, as it won’t come in with *éclat* by the side of Abbotsford.—Ever, my dearest ma, your affectionate son,
C. J. MATHEWS.”

Notwithstanding the length of the preceding letter, it would be an unwarrantable omission not to quote some passages from the correspondence of the elder Mathews bearing upon his son’s introduction to the “Man of Men,” as the former styles the “Great Unknown.” Under date December 23rd 1825, he writes to Mrs Mathews :—*

“On Tuesday we met the Man of Men—the Great Well-Known—at James Ballantyne’s. Charles was all hopes, all fears. Ballantyne, with great kindness, placed him next Sir Walter at dinner. He soon cheered him with his affability ; and his good humour brought out our son. Sir Walter was very much struck with the ‘Roman Sermon,’ lauded it highly, and Charles’s song was repeatedly cheered by him with ‘Vary clever ; oh, exceedingly good ; excellent, indeed !’ When I went into the drawing-room, Ballantyne took me with great mystery into the library, and said, ‘Your son has made a great impression on Sir Walter.’ . . . This ended in an invitation to Abbotsford, and a request that I would bring Charles with me ; and in his brief way said, ‘He’s a very nice lad that, and exceedingly clever.’”

January 2nd 1826, “first night of Vandenhoff,” when there was played *Macbeth* ; which play was followed by productions of *As You Like It*, *Coriolanus*, *Twelfth Night*, and many other standard plays. On February 27th the farce of *Cramond Brig, or the Gudeman of Ballangeich*, was produced, in which both Mackay, as Jock Howieson, and Denham, as King James, made a great hit.† The piece has continued a favourite to the present day. The remaining parts were cast as follows :—Birkie of that Ilk = Harrold ; Tam Maxwell = Collier ; Grime = Rae ; Boston = Anderson ; Musgrave = Power ; Captain of the Royal Guard = Lee ; one of the Royal Pages = Miller ; Tibbie Howieson = Mrs Nicol ; Marion Howieson = Miss Noel. The songs introduced were :—“Saw ye Johnny comin’ ?” “The Soldier Laddie,” “And ye shall walk in silk attire ;” and the duet, “We’ll meet beside the dusky glen.”

* Vol. iii., *Memoirs*, p. 311.

† Played 27 times the first season.

On March 4th, Young commenced a short engagement, during which were produced *Much Ado About Nothing*, *Hamlet*, *Julius Cæsar*, *King Lear*, *Othello*, *Henry VIII.*, and *Cymbeline*, Vandenhoff playing second lead to Young.

* "Sunday, March 19th, was a somewhat memorable era in Dun Edin's theatric annals. Charles Young (whose engagement had just concluded), Charles Kemble (who was just going to begin), and William Charles Macready (passing through on his way to Glasgow), were all in the town at once for about an hour, though not together. On Monday, at the Theatre, I met 'Mr Charles.' His panniers had not arrived, and his was not a size fit to be easily suited. Properties every one was offering. I tendered my best cloak for Felix or Charles II., and was graciously thanked.

"The gentleman who was our merry monarch, Rochester, got out of the text, and said, " 'We have detected, my liege, a young—maid ; beautiful as a—virgin, and amiable as a—dragon!'

"He afterwards asserted,

" 'That sire's page, father ! had a wild father for his fellow's father.' "

The date of C. Kemble's opening was March 20th, and on April 5th he appeared (for the first time) as Rob Roy.

It was repeated on the 10th, and on May 22nd Murray " 'hopes he don't intrude' in respectfully announcing his benefit, when he will do himself the pleasure of once more 'dropping in' as 'Paul Pry.' The *Gentle Shepherd* was played on the same occasion as an after piece, Thorne taking the part of Patie, and Miss Noel, Peggie.

The following extract is from Benson Hill's "Playing About," (p. 89) :—

"About this time, having nought else to do, I took her † to the Theatre, expecting nothing special. We had not sat there long ere a box in the dress circle was entered by a fat, bare-necked, downy-chinned, rouged, elderly dame, in velvet and ermine, accompanied by a powdered gentleman. I instantly remembered Mrs Coutts. Her friend, I believe, was one of the Lords Beauclerk. There was a general buzz and stare for a few seconds ; the audience then turned their backs to the lady, their attention to the stage, to wait till the first piece should be over ere they intended staring again. Just as it terminated another party quietly glided into a box near that filled by the actress *millionaire* and her titled companion. One pleasing female was with the three male comers. In a minute the cry ran round, "Ech, yon's Sir Wa'ter, wi' Lockhart and his wife ; and wha's the wee bit bodie wi' the pawkie e'en ? Wow, but it's Tam Moore, just—Scott, Scott ! Moore, Moore !' with shouts, cheers, bravo, and applause.

"How happy looked the dear daughter and great son-in-law, to sit, as comparative no-

* Benson Hill's "Playing About," p. 104.

† His sister.

bodies, beside their chief. But he would not rise to appropriate these tributes. One could see that he urged Moore to do so; he, though modestly reluctant, at last yielded, and bowed, hand on heart, with graceful animation. The cry for Scott was then redoubled. He gathered himself up, and with a benevolent bend, acknowledged this deserved welcome. The orchestra played alternate Scotch and Irish melodies. When the *feddlers* came to 'Here's to her,' one man in the pit faced the boxes and sung—

' With golden key wealth thought
To pass, but 'twouldn't do;
But wit a diamond brought,
And cut his bright way through.'

Then followed a drama, founded on the Abbot. The future Duchess seemed much to relish the acting of her congenial *protégé*, Mrs Renaud; Sir Walter looked charmed with the snatches of 'auld sang' by his 'Ain Baillyee.' I did not see the least token of recognition between the Scott and Mellon parties."

The above is as graphic a sketch of the inside of our Theatre in Scott's time as could well be imagined, and affords us a charming picture of the manner in which the great novelist used to "drop in."

Woodstock, or the Cavalier; A Tale of the Year 1651, dramatised by R. Pocock, was produced on June 17th; it was only performed for seven evenings, and not again revived. The cast was as follows:—Charles II. = Denham; Villiers Duke of Buckingham = Collier; The Lord Wilton = Anderson; Sir Henry Lee = Mackay; Colonel Albert Lee = Benson Hill; Roger Wildrake = Jones; Oliver Cromwell = Pritchard; General Harrison = Lee; Bleetson = Rae; Colonel Everard = Murray; Pearson = Wilton; Trusty Tomkins = Mason; Corporal Humgudgeon = J. Stanley; Cromwell's Daughter = Miss Mason; Phœbe Mayflower = Miss Dyer; Mistress Alice Lee = Mrs H. Siddons. Prologue spoken by Mr Pritchard. Epilogue by Mrs H. Siddons. A visit, early in June, of Terry was preceded by a short engagement of Master Burke, an infant phenomenon of seven years, who played the violin, sang "Scots wha hae," and acted Dr O'Toole in the *Irish Tutor*, all in one night.

A visit for a few nights of Miss Povey and Charles Bland, both appearing for the first time, completed the list of novelties for the season, which, after running 220 nights, closed on August 5th.

During the summer season (1826) Montague Stanley joined the company. According to his "Memoirs," by the late Rev. D. T. K. Drummond, Stanley was born at Dundee, January 5th 1809, but was immediately afterwards taken to the United States and Canada, where he remained till 1819. In 1824, he went on the stage under the name of "Manby" at York. When he joined Murray he had resumed his own

name. The "Memoirs" say he came to Edinburgh in 1828, but there is no doubt that the real date was 1826. Montague Stanley joined as one of the walking gentlemen; Vandenhoff being the leading man; Pritchard, second lead; Jones, light comedian; and Harrold, heavy man. Stanley was always called "Montague" Stanley to distinguish him from Stanley, the low comedian in the company, and John Stanley, dancer and utility man. Montague Stanley was a very handsome young man, well suited for the parts he played, and was useful as well as a singer, his name often appearing as taking part in glees, part songs, duets, &c., besides his being cast for vocal parts such as Don Ferdinand in *The Duenna*, &c.

The principal productions of the season (1826-7) which opened on November 14th, were *No*, a farce by Murray, which became very popular; February 10th 1827, *Comedy of Errors*, with a great deal of music introduced, the chief attraction being Murray and Mackay's rendering of the two Dromios; and on June 25th 1827, *Gilderoy*. The last was a national melodrama from the pen of the manager, but bears some resemblance to a play of the same name by William Barrymore, produced at the Coburg Theatre, London. The similarity, however, does not extend beyond the names of *Gilderoy* and *Walter Logan*, two of the characters, and a resemblance of ideas running through both pieces. Neither author could call the other a direct plagiarist. In Murray's version the parts of Walter Logan and Jock Muir were clearly written to suit Denham and Mackay respectively. The piece was cast as follows:—General Baillie = Taylor; Captain Monkton = Montague Stanley; Sergeant Musqueton = Rae; Corporal Matchlock = Aikin; Bolt, the Gaoler = Wilton; Carbine = Anderson; Havoc = Miller; Bandalier = John Stanley; Walter Logan = Denham; Jock Muir = Mackay; Allan of Duncarty = Harrold; Mr M'Tavish = Mason; Gilderoy = Pritchard; Liliash Logan = Miss Mason; Mrs M'Tavish = Mrs Nicol; Janet = Miss M. Murray. It is worth noting that Anderson mentioned here, who had been some time a member of the company, and who only played very small parts, became in after years the well-known tragedian, James Anderson. Quite a number of stars appeared during the season, chiefly worthy of note being the first visit paid to this Theatre by T. P. Cooke, the great "sailor" actor. This extraordinary character and undoubted genius fairly took the town by storm. In the *Noctes* he is spoken of as follows:—

"*Shepherd*.—Tell me, Sir, did you gang to see Mr Tay Pay Cooke in *The Pilot*? Did ye ever see the like o' yon?"

“*North*.—The best sailor, out of all sight and hearing, that ever trod the stage.

“*Shepherd*.—Do ye ca’ yon treddin’ the stage? Yon’s no treddin’. When he first loupit out o’ the boat on the dry laun’, tryin’ to steady himsel’ on his harpoon, he garred me fin’ the very furm ’aneath me in the pit shooin up and down, as if the earth were lowsened frae her moorin’s. I grew amaist sea sick.

North.—Nothing overdone—no bad bye-play, blabbing of the landlubber—not too much pulling up of the trousers—no ostentatious display of pig-tail—one chuck of tobacco into his cheek, without any perceptible chaw, sufficient to show that next to grog the quid is dear—no puling, no whining, when on some strong occasion he pumps his eye, but merely a slight choking of that full, deep, rich, mellow voice, symphonious, James, in all its keys with the ocean’s, whether piping in the shrouds or blowing great guns; running up, James, by way of pastime, the whole gamut; and, then, so much heart and soul, James, in minute particulars, justifying the most passionate exhibition when comes crisis or catastrophe—

“*Shepherd*.—What for no do you no mention the hornpipe? I wad gie fifty pounds to be able to dance yon way. Faith, I wad astonish them at the kirns. Haw, haw, haw! The way he twists the knees o’ him, and rins on his heels, and doun to the floor wi’ a wide spread-eagle amaist to his very doup; up again like mad, and awa’ aff until some ither nautical movement o’ the hornpipe, bafflin’ a’ comprehension as to its meanin’; and then a’ the while siccan a face! I wish I kent him, he maun be a fine fallow.

. . . “*North*.—But all his experience of a sea life and all his genius would have been vain had he not possessed within his own heart the virtues of the British tar. That gives a truth, a glow of colouring to his picture of Long Tom, just, my dear James, as if you were to act the principal part in that little piece of mine, *The Ettrick Shepherd*.

On the evening of February 23rd 1827, the dinner in aid of the Edinburgh Theatrical Fund was held in the Assembly Room, and the event became for ever memorable from the fact of Sir Walter Scott choosing it as the occasion for clearing up the mystery of the “Great Unknown,” by avowing himself the sole author of the “Waverley” novels.

Lord Meadowbank was in the chair, and proposed the health, not of the “Great Unknown,” but of Sir Walter Scott, the author of the Waverley novels. Scott rose to reply, and then distinctly owned to having written every word of them, saying in conclusion, “I beg leave to propose the health of my friend, Bailie Nicol Jarvie. And I am sure that when the author of ‘Waverley’ and ‘Rob Roy’ drinks to Nicol Jarvie, it will be received with the just applause to which that gentleman has always been accustomed; nay, that you will take care that on the present occasion it shall be pro-di-gi-ous!” Mr George Croal, one of the very few yet living who was present on this memorable occasion, says that there was no question about the prodigiousness both in quantity and quality. The enthusiasm simply knew no bounds;

but as the first thunderclap of mingled cheering, clapping, and knocking of glasses subsided, the voice of the Bailie (Mackay) was heard saying, "My conscience! my worthy faither the deacon could never have believed that his son would hae sic a compliment paid him by the Great Unknown!" To which Scott added the correction, "The small known now, Mr Bailie."

Only one disagreeable fact in connection with this interesting occasion has to be recorded. It is that Sir Walter Scott,—the "King of Scottish Society," as Mathews once termed him, he who, above all other men, was for all time, this great reader of human hearts,—set down in his diary, when chronicling the dinner, the following piece of snobbishness:—"They all behaved themselves perfectly. . . . The performers performed very like gentlemen, especially Will Murray."

Scott's great fondness for the Theatre, and friendship for many of the actors of that time, is well known. Terry, John Kemble, Young, and Siddons were all intimate friends of his; but still the impression left on one after reading Lockhart's life, cannot be quite free from the suspicion that, during his later years at least, Scott rather depreciated and looked down upon the theatrical profession. Even in his letters to Terry a slight difference in tone cannot but be noted. It is true that Scott befriended Terry about this time in a most substantial manner; he would probably have done so again had occasion required such a proof of friendship. Scott was essentially a man of perfect honour, and he would certainly think it writ down in his duty to do to his friends as he himself would be done by. But this did not prevent his holding an opinion of actors as individuals different to what he had held twenty years previously. It is perhaps vain to try to find out now what the reason of this was. The Bohemian nature of the actor's life, which suited him so well in 1809 or 1810, may have become irksome in 1827; but it is difficult to believe that adulation, freely bestowed, had caused Scott to treat with patronising airs such men as Terry or Murray. The question, however, besides being unpleasant to discuss, is foreign to the purpose of the present subject.

Another entry in Scott's diary is more pleasantly interesting.

"March 2nd. Funny thing at the Theatre last night. Among the discourse in *High Life Below Stairs*, one of the ladies asks who wrote Shakspeare. One says Ben Jonson; another, 'Finis;' 'no,' said Will Murray, 'it is Sir Walter Scott, he confessed it at a public meeting the other day!'"

The season closed on July 14th, and on the 16th the Theatre opened for one night, when the management most courteously gave a benefit to Ryder of the Caledonian Theatre.

The "summer" season of 1827 lasted only from October 8th to 30th, nineteen nights in all, and on the 10th of the following month the winter season of 1827-8 opened with *The Barber of Seville* as principal piece. The first new play of the season was *The Sergeant's Wife*, a play which was first produced at the English Opera House and then at Covent Garden. In London the Keeleys, O'Smith, and Miss F. Kelly had made a great hit in it, and in Edinburgh it was tolerably successful. *Thirty Years of a Gambler's Life*, from the Adelphi, London, produced here on November 23rd, also proved a favourite; and the management scored another success with Signor De Begnis' Italian Opera Company, which opened with the *Il Barbiere* on December 13th. Miss Fanny Ayton was prima donna; Signor Torri, primo tenore; Signor De Begnis, besides being director, was primo buffo; Yaniewicz, a local musician of great celebrity, conducted the orchestra; Pindar, the conductor for the Theatre, made himself useful by playing viola; and Signor Gabussi presided at the pianoforte.

Italian Opera was a distinct novelty, and naturally "drew." It was not, however, the first time an Italian Opera Company had visited the city, as some of the papers asserted.

During the engagement, besides *Il Barbiere*, there were performed *Il Turco in Italia*, *Il Fanatico per la Musica*, and *La Gazza Ladra*, a selection that would scarcely attract audiences now-a-days.

On January 14th, the pantomime of *Harlequin and Mother Goose* was produced. This was, no doubt, Tom Dibdin's, although as usual in those days no acknowledgment was made either on the playbill or in fees to the author for the use of the piece. *Mother Goose* was Dibdin's best pantomime, and when produced at Covent Garden in 1805-6, ran some ninety odd consecutive nights. Here also it was very successful, and was given twenty-two times. Squire Bugle, afterwards clown, was played by Taylor, a clown who was said to rival Grimaldi. He became a great favourite in Edinburgh. It may be mentioned as illustrative of the manner in which our grandfathers liked to take their amusement, that on the opening night of the pantomime it was preceded by Dr Young's tragedy, *The Revenge*, in five acts.

On February 2nd, Young commenced a twelve nights' engage-

ment, playing Iago to Vandenhoff's Othello ; Mrs Renaud, Emilia ; Mrs H. Siddons, Desdemona.

Every Man in his Humour, by Ben Jonson, was revived this season (February 20th), and was so successful as to call for two repetitions.

On Monday, April 21st, a drama in three acts, called *Charles Edward; or, The Last of the Stuarts*, was produced. It was described in the bills as translated from the French, and adapted to the British stage, by a son of the celebrated Flora Macdonald. Charles Edward Stuart = Pritchard ; Sir Alexander Macdonald = Denham ; General Campbell = Mason ; Captain Darlton = Montague Stanley ; Lieutenant Standard = Murray ; O'Niel = Harrold ; Roderick Mackenzie = Anderson ; Malcolm Mackay = Mackay ; Lady Macdonald = Mrs Stanley ; Flora Macdonald = Miss Noel.

This play was quite successful, being played several times during its first season, and it remained for years a stock piece.

The Battle of Bothwell Brig, another of the Waverley dramas, written by Charles Fairley, and first brought out at Covent Garden, was played on June 12th, but seems to have been a failure. Denham, being ill at the time, had no part. A number of "stars" appeared during the season, which, after running 230 nights, closed on August 16th 1828.

A summer season opened on the 25th of the same month with a decided novelty, in the shape of a French Company, "from Paris and the Theatre Royal, English Opera House, London." The company included M. Cloup, M. Alfred, M. Pelissié, M. Berteché, M. Preval, M. Gamard, Mlle. St Ange, Madame Beaupré, &c. They played, among other pieces :—*Les Freres a L'Epreuve*, *L'ours et le Pacha*, *La Femme a Deux Maris*, *Une Visite a Bedlam*, *Le Dépit Amoureux*, &c.

The Theatre again reopened on October 6th, with Miss Foote, who was engaged for twelve nights, and on the 20th, Mr Kean junior, "from the Theatre Royal, Drury Lane," made his first appearance in this city, playing Sir Edward Mortimer in *The Iron Chest*. Upon the closing night (October 25th) Murray stated in his customary address that the season had been a very bad one.

On November 4th 1828, the Theatre reopened for the winter season with *Know Your Own Mind*, while additional *eclat* was lent to the occasion by Mrs Siddons speaking an address in verse from the pen of Sir Walter Scott.*

* See Appendix.

At the commencement of the season there was little change in the company, but several alterations of importance were made later on. Pritchard did all the principal leading business till the after season, when a Mr Barton, from Dublin and Manchester, joined as tragedian. Williams joined to fill Mason's parts, while Larkin (tenor) and Hart (bass) replaced Thorne and Ebsworth.* M'Gregor, a comedian, also joined. A number of new plays were brought out. The first was on November 7th, *The Bottle Imp*; the following evening *The Two Friends* was given; and on the 10th November, was produced the *Two Drovers*, specially licensed for this Theatre. This version differs from that written by Mr Goff for the Surrey Theatre, London, and is probably Murray's. The part of Robin was quite an out-of-the-way one for Montague Stanley to assume, he being an Englishman. It was played one night only, and was not revived again until 1834 (September 25th), when John Mason took the part of Henry Wakefield, Peddie that of Robin, and Mackay resigned the part of Hughie to Miller. On this occasion the cast was as follows:—Henry Wakefield = Stanley; Robin, a Highland drover = Montague Stanley; Hughie Morrison = Mackay; Squire Ireby = Campbell; Fleecebumkin = Taylor; Ralph Nesbet = Ebsworth; Sandy = Aikin; Thomas = John Stanley; Donald = Power; Jock = Jackson; Janet of Tomahourick = Mrs Renaud; Mrs Nesbet = Miss Anne Murray; Jenny Morrison = Miss Mary Murray; Martha M'Alpine = Miss Gray. In 1841, M'Ian (the artist) made a great hit as Robin. November 18th, Planché's *Green-Eyed Monster* was first played here, with Murray, Thorne, Jones, Stanley, Mrs H. Siddons, Mrs T. Hill, and Miss Noel in the cast. The French company re-appeared for eight nights, commencing November 19th; and on December 9th there was played, for the first time in any theatre, a new drama called *Aloyse; or, The Forester's Daughter*, the "melo-dramatic music" by Pindar, and the vocal music by an amateur. It ran for eleven consecutive nights. The cast was as follows:—Philip = Montague Stanley; Montejo = Denham; Martin Eretè = Mathews (the stock "heavy" actor, *not* Charles Mathews); Julian = Collier; Monsieur de Putzy = Murray; Madam Gageot = Mrs Nicol; Margaretta = Mrs Renaud; Aloyse = Mrs H. Siddons. Two nights after (December 11th) the *Mason of Buda*, which ran six nights; and on the 27th of the same month, a most interesting repro-

* Ebsworth became precentor of St Stephen's Church, a situation he retained many years. He also sang largely at concerts. His daughter married the famous Sam. Cowell.

duction of *As You Like It* was given. The costumes were entirely new, and taken from Planché's designs for Covent Garden. The cast, with the original authorities for the costumes employed by Planché, is annexed:—Frederick = Taylor ; authority—effigy of Francis II., Duc de Bretagne, *vide* Montfaucon. Oliver = Denham ; from costumes of the period, *vide* Montfaucon, and a work on tournaments by Louis de Bruges. Orlando = Montague Stanley ; authority—illuminations in a volume of epistles presented to Anne of Brittany. Le Beau = Campbell ; authority—Montfaucon. Charles = Power ; authority—Villemin's *Monumens Inédites*. Touchstone = Mackay ; authority—a print by Breughel and Froissart's *Chronicles*. The Duke, Jaques, and Amiens = Messrs Mathews, Pritchard, and Thorne ; authorities—*Modus le Roy, Livre de Chasse*, folio, Chambery, 1468. Adam = Mason ; authority—*Des Proprietez des choses*, 1482. Corin = Ebsworth, and William = Murray ; authorities—woodcuts in the “*Shepherd's Kalendar*,” printed by Pinson. Rosalind = Mrs H. Siddons. Celia = Miss Gray. Phœbe = Miss Anne Murray. Audrey = Mrs Nicol. An excellent cast, splendidly mounted at great expense, and yet played only one night !

There was no pantomime this year, but on December 29th was produced a melo-dramatic spectacle, *The Fatal Rock*, better known and afterwards popular as *Jack Robinson and his Monkey*. January 1st 1829, in addition to *Charles Edward* and *The Fatal Rock*, a dramatic sketch called *The First Foot* was produced. *The Noyades*, a melo-drama suggested by an incident that occurred during the earlier periods of the French Revolution, the story borrowed from Sir Walter Scott's “*Life of Napoleon*,” was given on January 24th ; and on the 6th of the following month, Planché's *Charles XII.* was played, but without the author's name on the bills. This production was one of the few transactions in which Murray does not appear in a favourable light. In volume i., “*Recollections and Reflections*,”* by Planché, the author states that Murray wrote to him to inquire upon what terms he would allow the piece to be produced. Planché named £10—a moderate sum—which, however, Murray declined, on the ground that since the introduction of half-price in the provinces, the expenses attendant on the production of after pieces were barely covered by the receipts they brought in. “This was all very well, but Mr Murray had the dishonesty to obtain surreptitiously a MS. copy of the piece, and

* Page 148.

the effrontery in the face of the above excuse to produce the piece without my permission at *whole price*, leaving me to my remedy." Planché did not bring an action, but summoned a meeting of authors ; and the result was the bringing in and passing of the first "Dramatic Authors Act." The cast of *Charles XII.* in Edinburgh was excellent, Murray himself taking Liston's part of Adam Brock. The remainder of the cast was as follows :—Charles XII. = Denham ; General Duchert = Taylor ; Colonel Reichel = Collier ; Gustavus de Mervelt = Montague Stanley ; Triptolemus = Mason ; Major Vanberg = Mathews ; Ulrica = Miss Gray ; Eudiga = Miss Noel. *Charles XII.* was played frequently during the remainder of the season. On June 10th Mrs Renaud took her benefit, and apologised for having performed so seldom during the season. As a matter of fact, she was very old, and although still able to perform with much of her old force and spirit, she could not stand much exertion. As Mrs Powell, in former years, she was well-known as a first-rate tragic actress, and it has been said she came very near the great Mrs Siddons in some of her parts. She seems to have appeared originally in London under the name of Mrs Farmer, the part she took being Alicia in *Jane Shore*. Some difference of opinion exists, however, as to the exact date of this, the "Thespian Dictionary" making it 1787, and Genest 1788. She then went to Drury Lane, and played such parts as Anne Bullen, Virgilia, (*Coriolanus*), Lenora (*Revenge*), &c. On September 12th 1789, she appeared at Drury Lane as Lady Anne to John Kemble's Richard III. She was announced on this occasion as Mrs Powell, late Mrs Farmer (Powell was prompter at Liverpool and afterwards at Drury Lane). In 1794-5 her name is often found coupled with that of the great Mrs Siddons, and on May 2nd 1795, the latter lady appeared as Lady Randolph to Mrs Powell's Young Norval (for that night only, it being her benefit night). At this time she was unquestionably a good actress, and no doubt gained much valuable experience by acting with Mrs Siddons. On May 21st 1814, she played the Queen to John Kemble's Hamlet, and was described in the bills as "Mrs Renaud, late Mrs Powell." She did not appear in London after July 15th 1816 ; between that date and February 12th 1818, when she joined the Edinburgh company, she seems to have performed in the provinces as a star. After coming to Edinburgh she took all the heavy lead parts, such as Lady Macbeth, Queen in *Hamlet*, &c., and no doubt (for she was, perhaps, the best provincial "heavy" actress then living) afforded the various tragic stars,

such as Young and Kean, great help when they visited the town. Her experience was very extensive, and, having acted with John Kemble and Mrs Siddons, she had been able to study the very best models; besides which, as a few old playgoers still remember, her bearing was full of dignity, her voice clear and telling, and her elocution perfect. During her last season here many of her parts were taken by Mrs Stanley and Mrs Eyre. Mrs Renaud's actual last appearance was on September 30th 1829, when she played the Queen to Kean's Hamlet.

It exhibits a pleasing trait in Murray's character that her name was printed as a member of the company for 1829-30, and although she never acted, it was generally understood that she regularly received her salary to the time of her death, which seems to have happened about that time. The last recorded mention of her name was on June 4th 1830, when Mrs H. Siddons allowed her a benefit, at which, however, Mrs Renaud did not appear.

A short but brilliant after-season commenced on Tuesday, September 22nd. Barton made his first appearance as *The Stranger*, with Mrs W. West, who was now quite a celebrity in her profession, as Mrs Haller. On the 24th Edmund Kean opened a six nights engagement, and on October 3rd, after postponing her appearance for a couple of nights on account of indisposition, Madame Vestris gave her inimitable rendition of *Lady Teazle*, while on the 7th she introduced her sister, the well-known singer, Miss Bartolozzi, to an Edinburgh audience. This engagement was followed by that of Braham, who was supported by Miss Phillips, a singer of great merit.

On November 3rd, 1829, commenced the last season under the patent granted to Henry Siddons. The first piece was *The Honeymoon*, in which Miss Jarman, now stamped with the Covent Garden hall-mark, took the part of Juliana. Barton continued in the leading business, playing the Duke on this occasion. Hooper,* from the Theatres Royal, Bath and Liverpool, made his first appearance here playing Rolando, and Miss Pincoff (afterwards the famous Mrs Frank Mathews) played Zamora. In the farce of *The Weathercock*, which followed, Mrs Evans (late Miss Glover, sister of Edmund Glover, and of the Haymarket Theatre) also made her first appearance. On the 6th November Miss Paton, the celebrated vocalist, appeared, and performed for five nights in a round of English

* Afterwards well-known in London as "Gentleman" Hooper.

operas. A piece from Covent Garden, that gained some popularity here, called *The Robber's Wife*, was brought out on November 12th, and Macready and Miss Smithson afterwards paid a short visit. This lady proved in Edinburgh as great a failure as in Drury Lane some years before, the houses being almost empty. For all that, there is little doubt that the extraordinary success she achieved in Paris and on a minor scale at Covent Garden, was well deserved. Professor Wilson, writing in the *Noctes*, says :—

“*Shepherd*.—Saw ye ever Miss Smithson ?

“*North*.—Yes—in *Jane Shore*. She enacted that character finely and powerfully,—is an actress not only of great talent, but of genius—a very lovely woman—and, like Miss Jarman, altogether a lady in private life.”

The above probably summed up her characteristics completely. She was certainly very beautiful ; and, as is well-known, married Berlioz, the composer.

The most interesting event of this year was the production, on December 17th, of Sir Walter Scott's play *The House of Aspen ; or, The Secret Avengers*. It was written many years before this date, and the author then submitted the MS. to his friend John Kemble, who said it was unsuited for the stage, a verdict in which Scott, with his usual good temper, acquiesced. Accordingly it was laid upon the shelf ; but in 1829 it was published in the annual entitled the *Keepsake*, for 1830. Elliston, who then had the Old Surrey Theatre, immediately had it brought out on his stage (Tuesday, 17th November 1829), in order, as he said on the bills, “to afford the admirers of the celebrated author an opportunity to test its fitness for stage representation.” According to subsequent Surrey playbills, it was received “by an overflowing house with the most unequivocal marks of the warmest approbation.” The music for this production was by Blewitt, the scenery by Marshall, and the cast included Messrs Gough, Warwick, Osbaldiston, Dibden Pitt, Forrester, Lee, Webb, Buckingham, Yardley, Ashbury, Hicks, Almar, H. A. Bellamy, and Benson, and Miss Vincent, Mrs Egerton, and Miss Somerville. Of these, perhaps *only* Mrs Egerton could be considered fit for tragedy, Osbaldiston, Dibden Pitt, Warwick, and Almar, being only melo-dramatic actors. The playbills notwithstanding, the piece was not a success in London. Perhaps this was partly owing to the fact (mentioned in the playbills) that great alterations had been made in the play. No such alterations appear to have been made for the Edinburgh production, and it is not unlikely that Scott may have

to some extent lent his countenance to it. No pains were spared to make the performance as complete as possible. The new scenery was by Hillyard; properties, dresses, etc., were all new, and the overture and vocal and instrumental music specially composed by "an Amateur." * The cast was as follows:—The Duke of Bavaria = Hooper; Rudiger, Baron of Aspen = Denham; George of Aspen = Barton; Henry of Aspen = Montague Stanley; Martin = Taylor; Roderick = Pritchard; William = Power; Hugo = Rae; Gertrude = Miss Phillips; Isabella = Miss Jarman. The Theatre was closed on the 16th to allow of rehearsals, a proceeding very uncommon in those days; and according to a contemporary MS. note in a volume of playbills belonging to a gentleman in this city, the rehearsals lasted from 10 A.M. to 5 P.M., and began again at 8 P.M. *The House of Aspen* was performed eight nights in succession here, and was then withdrawn† for the production, on December 29th, of the "New Grand Comic Harlequinade," entitled *Twelfth Cake*, the music by Pindar, and the scenery by Hillyard. W. E. Taylor‡ was Clown, and Montgomery, from Astley's, the Harlequin. Miss Fairbrother, who was an exceedingly beautiful woman, was Columbine. This proved a great success, and ran till the 22nd January.

Charles Mathews, who was fulfilling what proved to be his last engagement here, was present at the second of the Edinburgh Theatrical Fund dinners. It proved a very successful affair, some four hundred guests sitting down. The Lord President was in the chair, and the Dean of Faculty croupier. £350 was collected on the spot, and Mathews made a very interesting speech, in which he said that had Sir Walter Scott been present he (Mathews) would have asked him the question why it was he did not give his mighty genius to the stage by writing plays. After an absence of two years Vandenhoff returned in February, and was joined in a few days by Young. February 26th, *Julius Cæsar*. Julius Cæsar = Denham; Octavius Cæsar = Montague Stanley; Mark Antony = Pritchard; Brutus = Young; Cassius = Vandenhoff. March 1st, *Othello*. Iago = Young; Othello = Vandenhoff; Cassio = Murray; Roderigo = Hooper; Desdemona = Miss Jarman.

The great Wilson made his first appearance on any stage, as Henry Bertram in *Guy Mannering*, on March 18th, at the Theatre Royal. Up

* This was John Thomson, afterwards professor of music in Edinburgh.

† It was played several times afterwards during the season.

‡ See page 322.

to that time he had been nothing more than a local precentor, and according to the testimony of a gentleman still living, who remembers his whole career, "he acted like a precentor all his life!" There were no announcements of his name in large type, the bills merely mentioning that it was a first appearance; but his success, as is well-known, was as rapid as it was great; even his native town—contrary to proverbial rule—hailing him with acclamation.

Masaniello was produced for the first time in Edinburgh* on March 30th, Wilson playing in the title rôle, and Miss Jarman, the Dumb Girl of Portici; but as none of the male characters were in the hands of singers, except those played by Wilson and Hart, it is difficult to imagine how the piece was given. Montague Stanley was Don Alphonso; Rae, Gonzalo; Stanley, Pietro; Miss Phillips, Donna Elvira; Miss Tunstall, Stella; and Miss Fairbrother, Annette.

For some time previous to this, Mrs H. Siddons had been playing in a round of her best parts prior to taking her farewell benefit, which interesting event took place on the 29th March. The crowd, according to the *Scotsman*, both within and without, was beyond anything witnessed since the King had visited the Theatre. It says:—

"Esteem and regard were obvious in the manner of the audience. Regret too was felt, and no wonder; for they must be young indeed who cannot speak of the gratification they have received from the public appearance of Mrs Siddons. No one ever succeeded so thoroughly in giving to the stage the air of the drawing-room—in giving to consummate skill in dress, and address,—in attitude, action, manner,—the semblance of artlessness. She never strained beyond or fell below what was suitable at once to her characters and her own powers,—an observation which cannot, we imagine, be applied to any other performer who has such a range in comedy, melo-drama, and tragedy."

The play was the *Provoked Husband*, Mrs Siddons playing Lady Townly, while the address which she delivered was from the pen of her great patron, Sir Walter Scott.† Some idea of the crowded state of the house may be gathered from the fact that the members of the orchestra were obliged to give up their domain between pit and stage and mount the latter, where they discoursed sweet music.‡ This was not Mrs Siddons' last appearance, however, even for the season. Fearing that her brother's illness, which occurred soon afterwards, would detract from the success of the

* So say the bills, but it had been produced at the Caledonian Theatre on July 30th 1829.

† See Appendix.

‡ MS. note by Cameron, viola player, in vol. of playbills once belonging to himself.

usual benefits, she came forward and in the most handsome manner lent her powerful aid to several of the casts.

Liston paid his farewell professional visit during April, and on the 19th of the same month *Black Eyed Susan* was played for the first time at this Theatre, T. P. Cooke sustaining his original part of William. The following is from the *Noctes* regarding this impersonation :—

“*North*.—T. P. Cooke, the seaman, is to take his benefit one of these nights—

“*Shepherd*.—Let’s a’ gang in a body, to show our pride and glory in the British navy, of which he is the best, the only ideal representative, that ever rolled with sea born motion across the stage. Nae caricaturist he—but Jack himsel. He intensifies to the heart and the imagination the word—TAR.”

In this production Montague Stanley played Captain Crosstree ; Larkin, Blue Peter ; Mrs Stanley, Black Eyed Susan. The *Scotsman* speaking of Cooke’s William says, “it is without exception one of the most forcible pieces of acting of its kind we have ever seen.”

The story of how Fanny Kemble saved Covent Garden Theatre from wreck is too well known to require repetition here. Fresh from her triumphs in the Metropolis she came to Edinburgh, and astonished our playgoers with her wonderful genius. Her first appearance was on June 14th in *Romeo and Juliet*, in which she gave her marvellously life-like impersonation of the principal part ; not, however, according to one critic,* without showing symptoms of fatigue from her recent voyage. The same authority says :—“The family likeness is not to be mistaken. The eye in particular is that of a Kemble ; and the resemblance to the great Mrs Siddons was very striking.”

It seems that the Edinburgh audiences did not receive her enthusiastically at first ; but on her benefit, being the last night of the season (June 26th), they made ample amends. Murray was still indisposed, so Charles Kemble, who accompanied his daughter, made the customary speech on the conclusion of the season.

The following interesting paragraph, referring to Kemble’s acting, is from the journal of Sir Walter Scott :—

“June 17th 1830.—Went last night to the Theatre, and saw Miss Fanny Kemble’s *Isabella*, which was a most creditable performance. It has much of the genius of Mrs Siddons, her aunt. She wants her beautiful countenance, her fine form, and her matchless dignity of step and manner. On the other hand, Miss Kemble has very expressive, though not regular features, and, what is worth it all, great energy, mingled with and chastened by correct taste.”

* *Scotsman*.

CHAPTER XIX.

THE CIRCUS.



BEFORE following the fortunes of the "Royal" any further, it is necessary to go back so far as 1790, in order to trace the history of the building which was then erected in Leith Walk at the head of Broughton Street, and was called in succession the "Circus," "Sadler's Wells," "Corri's Concert Room," the "Pantheon," the "Caledonian," and, at the period we have now arrived at, was to be rechristened the "Adelphi." At one time of its existence it had even had the honour and dignity of being by "Royal letters patent,"* but that red-letter day, as well as the time when it boldly contested in the courts of law the right to be designated the "Theatre Royal"† has already been treated of, and what has now to be set forth is the record of its more motley existence as a minor Theatre.

A certain Messrs Jones and Parker, circus proprietors, who had tenanted a temporary wooden structure at the corner of Broughton Street for some time prior to 1788, advertised, in the August of that year, for subscriptions to build an amphitheatre upon the same spot. The appeal was entirely successful, and the first permanent structure raised upon the site of the present Theatre Royal, was duly completed. From a long printed correspondence which passed between William Black, shareholder, and James Spence, agent for the shareholders of the building, many years after this,‡ some valuable information is to be had regarding the putting up of this first structure. A sub-tack and assignation was granted by Jones and Parker, to the subscribers to the Circus or Amphitheatre. This deed was dated 20th and 21st July 1790, and was granted in favour of nine trustees, who

* See page 258.

† In 1793. See page 218.

‡ It extended over several years, and will be noted in its proper place.

were nominated trustees for the whole others concerned, any three of whom were declared to be a quorum, and any two of them conveners. Their names were,—William Hamilton, Gilbert Innes, Alexander Ferguson, David Stewart, Francis Buchan, William Dallas, William Inglis, Daniel Hamilton, and William Anderson, and the amount subscribed was £2,200. The original shareholders had particular privileges, among which was free entrance to the building; a right, it may be mentioned, still enjoyed by their successors, the “renters,” to this day.

On January 25th 1790, the “Amphitheatre,” or “Edinburgh Equestrian Circus,” was duly opened. The first announcement set forth, it will “continue every evening during the week with great variety of entertainments. Equestrian exercises by Messrs Parker, Sutton, King, and Ricketts. Clown, Mr Jenkinson, commonly called the ‘great Devil,’ first appearance in Edinburgh. New ballet by Mr Holland and Miss Brugier, from Sadler’s Wells, London. Boxes, 3s.; Pit, 2s.; Gallery, 1s.”

During the season riding lessons were advertised to be given in the Circus,—“no gentleman being admitted during the ladies’ hours of riding;” and young colts were broken in by Parker for the sum of £2, 12s. 6d., and biting and throwing a horse upon its haunches, £1, 1s.”

On December 13th 1790, it was advertised in the *Courant* that constant fires had been kept in every part of the building for five weeks previously, “so that the most delicate constitution may not have the smallest apprehension of cold or damp.” It opened for the season on December 20th. It must have enjoyed a pretty fair measure of success, and the entertainments, which generally included a “pantomime,” and even at times a burletta, seem to have been well got up.

When it opened for the season 1791-2, a Mr and Mrs Wallack were members of the company, also Mr Dubois. The box office was kept by a Mr Alexander. The Wallacks, with the addition of Miss Wallack, remained the following season, and, as already noted, in April 1792 commenced their connection with the dramatic stage at the Royal.

On August 1st 1792, when the Royal closed, the Circus was in full swing with Meadows the tenor, and the Wallacks back again, pantomimes and burlettas being the chief attractions, in addition to the equestrian performances.

The particulars of the following season, 1793, have been fully chronicled already.* In November 1793, the Circus received its third

* P. 218.

name, namely, "New Sadler's Wells," Jones still being the lessee or proprietor. A large company was advertised, including Dubois, Ducrow, Bologna, and Mrs Ducrow. The season opened on November 2nd, when were present the Duke and Duchess of Gordon, Duke of Manchester, Lord Grey, Sir John M'Pherson, and Mr Fordyce.

Richer, from Sadler's Wells, on the tight-rope, proved a great attraction. Boxes and Pit, 3s. ; First Gallery, 2s. ; Second, 1s.

November 10th 1793, new comic burletta by T. Dibdin, *All is not Gold that Glitters*.

In 1795, the "New Theatre Circus" was opened by Jones on February 21st, and the performances—of the same type as the former year—continued for some months.

The following year (1796) the building was called "Jones' Royal Circus," and opened on January 26th ; and then in February 1797 it was advertised as the "Royal Circus," with a ballet dance, called the "Nosegay," by Mr D'Egville, Mr Bologna senr., Mr Bologna junr., and Miss Hall.

In 1798 there were no performances advertised, although a steady business seems to have been done in horse sales.

In 1799, equestrian performances were resumed ; Boxes, 3s. ; Pit, 2s. ; Gallery, 1s. ; but after that we hear no more of the Circus until 1803, when, on January 14th, it was opened as "Corri's New Room," with a grand ball. The interior had been entirely rearranged, so as to make it suitable for concerts, &c., and a medical report was published to the effect that the building was not damp. As the new name of the structure implied, Corri was the moving spirit in all this transformation. He was a wonderfully enterprising man, besides being an excellent musician, but from unexplained causes he never came successfully out of his many ventures. Before the opening of the new rooms Corri seems to have been in some sort of partnership with another resident musician of the name of Urbani, who now, however, started a violent opposition to Corri, by giving a series of subscription concerts in the Assembly Hall, along with card and dancing assemblies. He engaged Yaniewitz, from Liverpool, as his leader, Lolli as principal violoncello, and Miss Waters as vocalist ; and, in order to hurt Corri as much as possible, gave the first of his concerts on the same evening as the opening of the new rooms. Corri spared himself no trouble to make his venture popular, and probably the novelty of the thing may, for a while, have drawn a sufficient number of people about the place to make it pay him. This would especially be the case so long as Jackson's

bad management procured such indifferent companies at the Theatre. In the long run, however, Corri was a great loser by his speculation; he himself, according to Chambers, used to say he was so unlucky, that were he "to turn baker, people would give up eating bread!" It is not necessary to chronicle here the different entertainments given in the new rooms by the adventurous lessee, except when they were of a dramatic nature, the first of such a kind being on July 28th 1806, when Incledon and Bartley gave an entertainment called *Hospitality; or, the Harvest Home*, assisted by Horn at the piano; admission, 3s. Jackson evidently considered the giving of this performance an infringement of his patent, and advertised that, although he would not have recourse to legal measures on this occasion, he certainly would if Incledon or any one else should repeat the experiment. During the same season Messrs Elliot, Novello, and Evans gave concerts in the new rooms.

Corri's subscription concerts continued year by year, along with his dancing and card assemblies. During January 1808 Master Gattie appeared as solo violinist. On July 25th of the same year Mrs Mountain, after playing an engagement at the Theatre Royal, opened here with an entertainment called *William and Emma*, the whole of which was recited and sung by her. She gave several similar entertainments. The history of "Corri's Rooms" from the autumn of 1809 to the summer of 1811 has already been given.* During that period it assumed the dignity of being the Theatre Royal. Siddons, however, being obliged to go back to Shakspeare Square, the "New" Theatre was retransformed to its original state, and was again known as Corri's Rooms, and the concerts and card and dancing assemblies were taken up again in January 1812.

Corri, however, cannot have been content with the success of these, or else he became ambitious to rule the mimic world of the stage. Whatever his motives may have been, he presented a memorial to the Lord Chamberlain, in October 1812, praying for permission to perform operas and other musical pieces in Edinburgh. This memorial was backed up by a recommendation which stated, that Corri's application "appears extremely desirable and proper that the licence should be granted, as tending to improve the public amusements, and to introduce a better taste for music in the metropolis of Scotland," This document was signed by the following noblemen and gentlemen:—Aberdeen, Home, Morton, Elibank, John

* Page 258.

Sinclair, Leven and Melville, James Hall, Hastings, W. Gifford, W. Arbuthnot, David Balfour, W.S., Alex. Munro senr., M.D., George Wood, Surgeon, Douglas and Clydesdale, Kinnoul, Gray, Moray, Kelly, Buccleugh and Queensberry, Rothes, Balcaras, Aboyne, Caithness, George Clerk, Richard Shannon.

On December 8th 1812 a copy of the memorial and the recommendation were sent from the Lord Chamberlain's office to Henry Siddons, with a request for him to communicate any observations he chose to make on them. The nature of his observations may pretty well be inferred; and on December 21st it was intimated to him from head quarters, that Corri's application had been refused.

Some time in 1813 Henry Johnstone made a similar application,* without any better success.

The subscription concerts seem to have been discontinued in 1814, although the card and dancing assemblies still went on. In addition to these the building was used by the "Forum" debating club, to hold meetings in. The evening performances of the Edinburgh Musical Festival were given in Corri's Rooms in 1815, after which nothing of any moment occurred until 1817, when the *Courant* contains the following announcement:—

"CORRI'S NEW PANTHEON.

"The nobility, gentry, and public of Edinburgh are respectfully acquainted the Pantheon will open on Wednesday next, February 12th 1817, under the management of Mr Bannister. An introductory address (written expressly for the occasion) will be delivered by Mr Amherst, after which specimens of equestrian performances by the whole company. A new French ballet, produced by Mr Simpson, from the Theatre Royal, Covent Garden. Horsemanship by Master Wilkinson (pupil of Mr Clough), Miss Bannister, and Mons. Hengler, with performances on the tight-rope. Clowns, Messrs Jenkins and Hayes. To conclude with a pantomime."

Corri evidently designed to introduce in time performances of a more dramatic nature; for in addition to the building being fitted with a regular circus ring, a stage was built. The interior of the house, which was described as being exceedingly elegant, was designed by William Burn, architect. During the first season the performances were limited to circus entertainments and ballets; the charges for admission were 3s., 2s., and 1s. In November 1817, Corri began to indulge in the forbidden burlettas and operas, for, among other pieces of the "minor theatre"

* Report of Trial between Siddons and Ryder, 1825, p. 12.

nature, the *Forest of Bondy* was produced with great success. Encouraged by this, he continued producing melo-dramas, &c., and on January 17th 1818, we find the following extremely interesting announcement :—

PANTHEON.

FIRST NIGHT OF ROB ROY.

This Evening, Saturday, January 17th 1818, will be presented

Old and Young.

The whole to conclude with an entire new spectacle founded on a popular novel, with new scenes, dresses, combats, &c., called

ROB ROY.

In the course of which will be introduced a ballet by all the principal dancers. Boxes, 3s. ; Pit, 2s. ; Gallery, 1s.

This production of the popular novel preceded Pocock's adaptation at Covent Garden by two months. According to an advertisement in the *Perth Courier*, *Rob Roy* was produced "for the first time in Scotland" at the Perth Theatre, on Monday, June 22nd 1818, by Corbet Ryder's company, the cast being as follows :—Rob Roy = Samuel Johnson ; the Bailie = Mackay ;* Dougal = Williams ; Rashleigh = Denham (afterwards so popular in Edinburgh) ; Francis = W. Alexander ; Owen = Power ; Diana = Mrs Ryder ; Helen = Mrs Macnamara ; Martha = Miss Aitken, who was the daughter of Corbet Ryder's scene painter, and afterwards married William Macready, the tragedian. The version produced by Ryder on this occasion was probably Pocock's, but, curiously, although it had been a success in London when produced in the preceding March, Ryder did not think much of it, and consequently gave the part of "Rob" to Johnson. Corbet's father, who took the money at the door on this occasion, it is said, became terribly excited, when he heard the applause within becoming greater and greater as the play proceeded ; he could not leave his post, and Corbet was nowhere to be found till nearly the conclusion of the play. When he did arrive, the paternal wrath descended upon him in full force, for the old man had no mind that any one save his son should gain so much applause. Corbet was ordered to take the part, which, on learning the sensation it had made, he was nothing loth to do. He afterwards played "Rob" many hundreds of times up and down the country, and had no fewer than three versions of the play that his company used to perform.

Although the production at the Pantheon in January 1818 was not

* The great Mackay.

the Covent Garden (Pocock's) version, still it was an adaptation of the novel, and so proves not only that the Perth announcement was incorrect, but also that *Rob Roy* was produced as a play for the first time in Britain at Corri's Pantheon in Edinburgh. The *Courant*, speaking of it after the production, said :—

“The new piece founded on ‘Rob Roy’ was performed here for the first time on Saturday. The piece comprehends the most striking features of the novel, and is very ingeniously contrived ; the scenery was particularly good. Mr Munro was very happy in his delineation of Rob Roy, Mr Lancaster as the Bailie, and Andrew Fairservice, spoken by Mr Bell in the Scotch dialect, were very amusing. The house was well attended ; Lady Menzies and several fashionables graced the boxes.”

It did not prove a hit, and was withdrawn after a few nights.

It is not to be supposed that Murray of the Theatre Royal looked upon these performances at the Pantheon without doing something to prevent them ; and we find that Mrs Henry Siddons (the holder of the patent) presented a bill of suspension and interdict against Corri in the Court of Session. In the answers to the bill Corri admitted that the patent conferred upon the complainer an exclusive right to perform all entertainments of the stage, *which had been licensed by the Lord Chamberlain* ; but he stated that his performances were limited to such melo-dramas, &c., *as were not licensed*. Corri gained his case so far that the interdict was not granted, but Lord Hermand passed the bill for the trying of the question, and the case would most likely have gone against Corri ; but before it came to be heard he had become bankrupt, and the action was quashed in consequence. Such, at least, is the statement made in another bill of suspension and interdict which was brought some years afterwards by Mrs Siddons against Corbet Ryder, but it is questionable if it is strictly true, for although it is quite likely Corri may have been bankrupt, it is perfectly certain that the performance of melo-dramas, &c., continued at the Pantheon, and that Corri remained as manager or lessee.

On January 11th 1819, *Rob Roy* was played for the first time that season, Huckel, the tenor, taking the part of Francis ; and during the same month both rope dancing and ballets figure prominently in the bills ; Misses J. and M. Nicol appearing as principal dancers. January 21st, *Cherokee*, with the celebrated dog Carlo, from the Surrey and Coburg Theatres. Captain Moreton = Montague ; Jack Rattlin = Reilly ; Tom Pipes = Huckel ; Bertha = Miss J. Nicol. On January 28th Reilly gave a comic lecture in imitation of Mathews.

February 2nd, second night of *Heart of Midlothian*. John Duke of Argyle = Dearlove ; David Deans = Jervis ; Reuben Butler = Lee ; George Staunton = Fillingham ; Jack Ratcliffe = Munro ; Saddletree = Best ; Laird of Dumbiedykes = Bell ; Sharpitlaw = Reilly ; Queen Caroline = Miss J. Nicol ; Jeanie Deans = Mrs Dalton ; Effie = Miss M. Nicol. This adaptation was by Montague and Jervis, and the scenery by Dearlove and Roberts.

During March 1819 the "ring" of the Pantheon was occupied by John Swailes, a pedestrian ; and in April the edifice was devoted to the purposes of an exhibition of "artificial animation" and a "mechanical and optical museum." The autumn season opened with Italian operas (October 25th and 26th) ; Miss Corri, Signors Begrez and Ambrogetti being in the company, and Corri presiding at the pianoforte. Bologna, from Covent Garden, appeared in November, and on December 9th, Tom Dibdin's version of the *Heart of Midlothian* was brought out. John Duke of Argyle = Prior ; Staunton = Dickons ; David Deans = Proven ; Ruben Butler = Dearlove ; Laird of Dumbiedykes = Bell ; Queen Caroline = Miss Newcombe ; Jeanie Deans = Miss Goodwin ; Effie = Miss Davis ; Madge Wildfire = Miss Ingleby ; Margerie Murdochson = Mrs Davis.

Horsemanship, burlettas, and ballets, were all given this season, and on January 21st 1820, was advertised a fancy ball. Tickets 7s., and to the gallery 3s. "The music to be supplied by Mr Gow."

On November 6th 1820, the building was opened under the management of Mr Barrymore, from Astley's Amphitheatre, but nothing of any moment was given, and the season closed on March 3rd 1821, with the musical burletta of *Sir Peter Pry*.

The Pantheon opened for one night in May, when Alexander, late of the Royal, took his benefit.*

November 5th 1821, *Bride of Lammermoor*, second time. December 3rd, first night of *Kenilworth*, produced under the direction of Mr Mason. Earl of Leicester = C. Mason ; Earl of Sussex = Murray ; Blount = Mason ; Edmund Tressilian = Macnamara ; Wayland Smith = M'Gregor ; Elizabeth = Mrs Macnamara.

On February 11th 1822, Mathews, who appears to have had some dispute with Murray about terms, appeared at the Pantheon, giving his

* See page 296.

“at home” entertainment. The charges were raised to 5s., 3s., and 1s. 6d. This, with the exception of some circus performances, closed the existence of the Pantheon.

During the autumn the interior of the building was remodelled, and on January 11th 1823, it was opened as the “CALEDONIAN THEATRE.” Corri was dead, and the new lessee and manager was Henry Erskine Johnston, who delivered an address written by himself. The prices were 4s., 2s. 6d., and 1s., and the opening piece *Gilderoy*. Gilderoy = H. Johnston; Bailie M’Naben = Forrester, from Theatre Royal, Glasgow; Cloutem = Stanley, from York; Stephen Fetterall = Andrews, from Liverpool; Sergeant Shewer’em = Robertson, from Bristol; Colonel Havock = Austin, from Theatre Royal, Glasgow; Charlie = Miss Cleaver, from Theatre Royal, Newcastle; Willie = Master Stanley, Theatre Royal, York; Johnnie Howie = Chippendale, from Carlisle; Clod = J. Stanley, from Theatre Royal, Edinburgh; Clump = Simpson, from the same; Walter Logan = Munro; Jessy = Mrs Stanley, from Theatre Royal, York. The Chippendale mentioned above was the son of the actor of that name formerly at the Royal. At the time of his death, some months ago (1888), much nonsense was printed in the newspapers about his having as a young man assisted in reading the proof sheets of “Waverley.” The facts of the case are as follows:—Born in 1801, he accompanied his father to Edinburgh in 1814, and was then (most likely) put to the High School to finish his education. How long he remained there is not known; but he some time afterwards went to Ballantyne’s to learn printing, and was possibly introduced to that famous establishment by Sir Walter Scott. That Young Chippendale had any hand in even setting up any of the Waverley novels (“Waverley” itself was published in 1814), is doubtful, and that he should have “read” them is utterly out of the question, such work being reserved for skilful and trusted hands, and not done by apprentices. His father left the Edinburgh company in 1819, and in the same year the son took to the stage, and for years led a roving life with strolling players up and down the country.* This was his first appearance in Edinburgh—a town where fifty years after he was welcomed year after year as one of the precious remains of a generation of actors who could act. H. Johnston appended the following note to the foot of his first few playbills this season:—“Mr Henry Johnston respectfully requests that his townsmen

* See page 269.

and well-wishers will kindly indulge him, by giving his handbills a place in their shop windows and at the bars of the hotels and taverns."

*Gilderoy** ran for six evenings, and on January 25th, *Tom and Jerry* was produced. Scenery by Mr Ewbank, and drop scene by Mr Stanfield. Corinthian Tom = J. Mason ; Jerry Hawthorn = H. Johnston ; Logic = Stanley ; Billy Waters = Chippendale ; Princess Plumante = Mrs Chippendale. This piece ran some eighteen nights. February 20th, *The Pirate Bryce Snailsfoot* = H. Johnston ; Derrick = Chippendale. This only ran three nights, and on the 24th, *Giovanni in London* was produced. Don Giovanni = Bing ; Porous = Chippendale.

On the following evening (February 25th) a concert was given by the Edinburgh Professional Society of Musicians, in aid of the younger branches of the late Mr Natali Corri's family. It seems that Corri had died while on a professional tour in Germany in company with his daughters. Mrs Corri had to leave this country to bring them back, leaving her two sons in London—all of which, as a note on the bills states, had caused great expense and distress.

March 1st, *Tom and Jerry in Edinburgh*.

March 19th, *Peveril of the Peak*, first time ; after which, "first time on any stage," Burns' *Jolly Beggars*.

April 7th, last night of season, when Bradbury, the clown, appeared in the pantomime of *Mother Goose*.

Johnston was not sufficiently pleased with the result of his speculation to renew his lease for another season, so the Theatre was let to Ryder, the manager of the northern circuit of Scotland.

He opened on June 7th 1823 with *Rob Roy*. Rob Roy = Ryder ; Justice Inglewood = Fraser ; Sir F. Vernon = Marshall ; Rashleigh = Welsh ; Francis = Bing ; Morris = Montrose ; Owen = Collins ; Captain Thornton = Angus ; Major Galbraith = Mitchell ; MacStewart = Andrews ; Dougal = Lee ; Saunders Wylie = Taylor ; Bailie Nicol Jarvie = Williams ; Hamish and Robert = Miss Ryder and Miss M. Ryder ; Diana Vernon = Mrs Ryder ; Martha = Mrs Collins ; Mattie = Mrs Mitchell ; Hostess = Mrs Hillyard ; Helen = Mrs Angus.

June 23rd, *Quentin Durward*, first time out of London. Scenery by Phillips. Duke of Orleans = Bing ; Oliver Dain = Collins ; Hayraddin = Ryder ; Lord Crawford = Williams ; Quentin Durward = Butler ;

* Barrymore's version probably, see p. 319.

Sir Phillip = R. W. Power. July 19th, *Waverley*, "never before acted in Edinburgh." Prince Charles = Butler ; Fergus M'Ivor = Ryder ; *Waverley* = Marshall ; Bailie Macwheeble = Williams ; Rose Bradwardine = Miss Ryder ; Flora M'Ivor = Mrs Angus. Notwithstanding Ryder's enterprise in producing new pieces, the season does not seem to have paid, and the Theatre was closed on July 21st.

The much vexed subject of encroachment upon the rights of the Royal Patent cropped up again this summer. Mrs Siddons warned Ryder that she would not permit any infringement of her rights ; to which he replied that he was ignorant as to what her rights were under the Patent, but was quite sure they could not be greater than were the exclusive rights of Drury Lane and Covent Garden ; and as there were several minor theatres in London, surely there could be one in Edinburgh.

Ryder seems to have openly defied the Theatre Royal monopoly, and played during his first season many pieces which were distinctly stage plays in the full meaning of the term. That is, he did not confine himself to producing burlettas, pantomimes, operettas, &c., which were generally understood to be the peculiar property of minor theatres.

After a lengthy correspondence, Mrs Siddons applied for an interdict, which after great delay was granted, *de plano*, on February 24th 1825.*

While the lumbering and cumbersome process of the law was coming up to the defence of the Royal Patent and its imaginary exclusive rights, Ryder's skirmishing party had finished their season, as noted above, and retired scathless. The legal scarecrow raised by Mrs Siddons probably frightened any one from venturing upon a winter season. At any rate, the Caledonian was not opened during the winter of 1823-4.

On May 20th 1824, Alexander ventured to re-open the Caledonian doors for a short season, in open defiance of the Patent restrictions. In the bills he is described as manager of the Caledonian Theatre, Glasgow, and the Dumfries and Carlisle Theatres. He brought with him an entirely new company, but produced during his stay little else than melo-dramas, &c. His season closed on August 3rd.

Alexander's venture must have emboldened Ryder to risk another season, and we find him opening the Caledonian on January 1st 1825, when, the bills state, the house was lighted with oil gas. Several new names appear in the company, including Mrs Pindar, from the English

* See pamphlet "Report of the Trial," &c., 1825.

Opera House ; Gunn, from the Theatre Royal, Aberdeen ; Collyer, from Theatre Royal, Bath, &c.

On February 11th, the playbills contain an announcement of the interdict ; but no better commentary on the value of that dread sentence can be given than the fact that Ryder went on playing just the same in spite of it ! His system of revenge was far surer in its working ; it took the form of instituting half-price, a proceeding which had such a marked effect upon the audiences at the Royal, that Murray was obliged to follow the Caledonian lead in this matter, a fact which Ryder announced on his bill for March 1st, as a "Proud Triumph of the Caledonian in compelling the Theatre Royal to follow its example."

March 3rd, T. Dibdin's melo-dramatic romance of *The Pirate*. March 19th, for the benefit of Mr Ryder, a new version of *Kenilworth*. March 29th, new version of *Rob Roy*. May 3rd, third version of *Rob Roy*. Francis by Mason of the Theatre Royal, Edinburgh, "his first appearance on this stage." The performance was under masonic patronage, and the cast was printed in the bills as follows :—Rob Roy = Brother Ryder ; Bailie Nicol Jarvie = Brother Williams ; Major Galbraith = Mr Weekes. The season ended on June 28th 1825, and the house re-opened on August 20th for an equestrian and dramatic season, which terminated on October 1st.*

The winter season, 1825-6, opened on December 10th, with *Rob Roy*, being the 253rd representation that had been given of that piece by Ryder's company. Diana Vernon = Mrs Bass, from Theatre Royal, Dublin, her first appearance here ; Helen Macgregor = Mrs Younge, from Liverpool, her first appearance here ; Bailie Nicol Jarvie = M'Gregor ; Francis = Melrose, from the Haymarket, his first appearance.

On December 24th, *The Orphan Boy*, "by a gentleman of this city." Baron Montaldi = Bass, from the Theatre Royal, Dublin, his first appearance.

Ebsworth was a member of the company this season. He was author of many dramatic pieces, including *Adelaide*, *Ups and Downs*, *The Two Prisoners of Lyons*, *The Rival Valets*, *Rosalie*, and *The Minstrel*.

March 6th, *Rob Roy*. Diana Vernon = Mrs Haydn Corri, first appearance here ; Rashleigh = Bass. Mr Haydn Corri presided at the pianoforte.

March 22nd, for Ryder's benefit, *Rob Roy*. Rob Roy = Mrs Angel ;

* The gross rental of the building, with dwelling-house, four shops and cellarage included, at this time was £465. It was offered for sale at the upset price of £6,000.

Francis = Mrs H. Corri; Bailie Nicol Jarvie = Mrs Robertson; Diana Vernon = Mr Melrose; Helen = Ryder; Martha = Ebsworth.

On April 8th the season closed; the prices during the season were, 3s., 2s., and 1s.

On June 19th Mr Yates opened with an entertainment entitled, "Yates' Reminiscences," continuing until July 1st, the prices being raised to 5s., 3s., and 1s.

On December 2nd 1826, Ryder again opened the House with *Rob Roy*, in which several new performers made their appearance. These were as follows:—Miss Goff, from the Surrey Theatre, as Robert; Aitkin, from Theatre Royal, Brighton, as Rashleigh; G. Taylor, from Belfast, as the Bailie; Felton, from Theatre Royal, Bath, as Francis; Mrs W. Clifford, from Covent Garden, as Helen; and Mrs Boyle, from Glasgow, as Diana. Ebsworth was again in the company, and Miss Fairbrother, who was a beautiful dancer, and afterwards became a well-known member of the Theatre Royal company, was also at the Pantheon in 1826-7. February 3rd 1827, *Luke the Labourer*, "first time in Edinburgh." Luke = Aitken; Clara = Miss Fairbrother; Philip = Ebsworth. The season closed on April 4th 1827, and the summer season opened on June 9th, under Alexander "of the Caledonian Theatre, Glasgow, and the Theatres at Dumfries and Carlisle." The opening play was *Graham*, the title rôle being sustained by Diddear, from Theatre Royal, Manchester, his first appearance here.

August 7th, entirely new version of *Rob Roy*, from Caledonian, Glasgow.

August 26th, *Oberon*, first time in Edinburgh, music chiefly selected from Weber, adapted by Montague Corri for one of the Manchester theatres. Oberon = Miss M. Nicol; Titania = Miss Abington; Zephyr = Miss Fairbrother; Red Star = Miss C. Nicol; Puck = Miss E. Nicol.

A new version of *Waverley* was produced on September 4th, and of *Montrose* on September 8th.

There does not seem to have been any performance during the winter 1827-8; but on May 13th 1828, Alexander again opened the Caledonian, the play being *Paul Jones*.

On July 4th, a new melo-drama, called *The Writer's Clerk; or, Life in Edinburgh*, by "a gentleman of Edinburgh," and on the following evening, *The Two Drovers*, dramatised from the "Chronicles of the Canongate," for the first time in Edinburgh. Harry Wakefield =

Hamilton ; Robin = Alexander. The season closed on September 20th.

Alexander opened for a short season on December 29th 1828, closing on January 17th 1829, the principal attraction being the performances of Wilson, a rope dancer.

From April 23rd to May 23rd 1829, Alexander again opened the Caledonian, but the proprietors of the building being dissatisfied with the small number of nights he kept the house open, declined to renew his lease, so Alexander was compelled to bid adieu to Edinburgh, as it proved, for good.

The new tenant was Charles Bass, who opened on June 13th 1829, with an original address.

On June 15th, a new tragic drama, written expressly for the Caledonian, called *The Death of Virginia ; or, The Last of the Decemviri* Appius Claudius = Tyrer ; Spurius Oppius = Wallace ; Virginius = C. Bass ; Virginia = Miss Julia Nicol.

June 22nd, *The Fair Maid of Perth*, as performed by the same company in Perth and Dundee.

Rob Roy was played for the first time under the new management on July 6th. Rob Roy = Bass ; Bailie Nicol Jarvie = M'Gregor ; Diana Vernon = Mrs C. Bass.

July 25th, "for the first time in this city," *Black-Eyed Susan ; or, All in the Downs*. William = C. Bass ; Jacob Twig = Ferrers ; Captain Cross-tree = Bevan ; Blue Peter, with the ballad of "Black-Eyed Susan," = Martin ; Black-Eyed Susan = Miss J. Nicol ; Dolly Mayflower = Miss Poole.

July 30th, for the first time in Edinburgh, the melo-dramatic spectacle of *Masaniello*. Alfonso = J. Mason ; Masaniello = Bass. This piece took immensely, and ran some fourteen or fifteen nights.

The season closed on September 26th.

During the first two weeks in December Signor Venaфра brought down the Opera House dancers from London, along with an opera company. The venture proved a great failure, and a special benefit was in consequence given him on December 14th, under the patronage of the Duke of Hamilton.

Bass opened for four nights on December 30th, the play being *John Overy*, in which the part of Bosk was taken by Lloyd, from the Theatre Royal, Exeter, his first appearance here. This gentleman, who yet lives

as one of the honoured patriarchs of the profession, has recently given to the world some reminiscences of his theatrical career,* among which he notes his first appearance in Scotland as follows :—

“As the hackney-coach, with my luggage outside and myself inside, drove away from the door, I took a last look up at the house, and there, at the wide open window, were my kind parents waving farewell with their handkerchiefs to their prodigal son. I soon got to Fetter Lane ; and, in a few minutes afterwards, started from the White Horse in the spanking four-horse coach which, in those days before railways, was the favourite means of locomotion between London and Scotland. At that time of the year (November) it may be believed that the journey north was not an extra lively one ; and, therefore, I need not extract from my diary any details connected with it. Suffice it to say that on, I think, the third evening, we arrived safely in Edinburgh. I recollect our driving up Waterloo place, and passing what I made sure was the Theatre Royal, from the number of lamps around it ; and I found afterwards that I was correct in my conjecture. In a few minutes we drew up at the hotel where the coach stopped. It must have been the Black Bull in Leith Street, then kept by Piper. Here I put up for the night, and tired enough I was, soon went to bed, and very soon after to sleep. Next forenoon found me betimes at the Caledonian Theatre, where I introduced myself to my future manager, Mr Bass. I found him a nice jolly-looking fellow, and he received me very kindly. He told me that the season here was just about closing ; after which they went to Dundee for three months, and then came back to Edinburgh. I played a few parts here which were neither noticed by the press nor recognised by the public. In reference to this time, all that I find in my diary are one or two jottings such as, ‘appeared—got on very well.’ And I thought so then. In later years I became not so confident of my own complete success. In point of fact, I may state that I never was thoroughly satisfied with my acting of any part in my life ; and, although complimented during my time in the most flattering manner by the press, and cheered by the audiences, I have gone home thinking to myself—‘I’m certain I could have played that better.’”

Other new members of Bass’ company in the cast were as follows :—John Overy = Edwards, from the Theatre Royal, Bath ; and Mayfly = Sterling, from the Theatre Royal, Brighton. After the melo-drama, Lloyd sang a comic medley, then played the part of Gregory in the *Two Gregories*, and Sam Smoothface in the concluding farce of *Law and Lions*. The prices were 3s., 2s. 6d., 2s., and 1s.

The season, although announced for only four nights, extended to ten, during which time Lloyd played *fifteen* different parts, besides singing comic songs.

After the Caledonian closed, on January 9th 1830, Bass took his company to Dundee, returning to Edinburgh and opening on March 8th 1830. Bass had got together an excellent company, especially in the

* They appeared in one of the Glasgow evening papers ; unfortunately Mr Lloyd has not as yet thought fit to publish them in a more permanent form.

vocal line. The opening piece was *The Freebooters*, the following being the cast:—Uberto = Reynoldson, from the Theatres Royal, Bath and York; Giovanni = C. Bass; Oggero = Curryer; Giuseppe = E. Edmunds, from the Theatre Royal, York; Nicolo = Lewis; Edoardo = G. Horncastle, from the Theatres, Bath and York; Gianni = Baker, from the Theatres Royal, Bristol and York; Ceechina = Miss Horncastle; Isabella = Mrs Cummins, from the Theatres Royal, Hull and York. There were fifteen incidental pieces of music (many of them of considerable length) included in the piece, after the conclusion of which “God Save the King” was sung, and the performances closed with *Black-Eyed Susan*, for which the curtain rose at eleven o’clock. In this E. Edmunds played Blue Peter, and was encored three times for his rendering of the beautiful ballad of “Black-Eyed Susan,” incidental to the part.

Mr Edmunds, who made his first public appearance in Scotland on this particular evening, is an honoured citizen to the present day, and was recently (1887-8) elected by the Edinburgh professional musicians as the president of their newly formed “Edinburgh Society of Musicians.”

He was a pupil of T. Cooke of Drury Lane and of Liverati, and appeared in public in 1823 at the Drury Lane fund dinner, and again on November 10th 1824 at the production of *Der Freyschutz* at Drury Lane Theatre. These performances, however, were only as a boy vocalist, his first proper appearance on the stage being at Manchester on August 25th 1829, on which date he played the part of Henry Bertram in *Guy Mannering*. He proved a valuable addition to Bass’ company, and on Horncastle leaving, Edmunds at once stepped into the post of first tenor. The great Professor Wilson, in his *Noctes Ambrosianæ*, has indeed rendered the name of Edmunds well-nigh immortal by the following mention:—

“May 30th 1830.—*Shepherd*. Bass is a speerited manager.

“*North*. He is; and there I heard a few weeks ago, one of the sweetest, strongest, and most scientific singers that now chants on the boards—Edmunds. His Black-Eyed Susan is delicious. He is but a lad—but promises to be a Braham.”

During this winter season Bass included an opera in almost every evening’s programme, besides which several concerts were given, both of sacred and secular music. *Le Nozze di Figaro*, *Il Barbiere di Siviglia*, *Der Freischütz*, and the *Witch of Dornclough* (musical drama) were particular favourites, and were frequently played during April and May.

On June 5th 1830, a drama, written by Sir Walter Scott, entitled *Auchindrane; or, the Ayrshire Tragedy*. John Mure = C. Bass; Philip Mure = W. L. Rede; Gifford = Bevan; Quentin Blane = Hield; Hildebrand = Curryer; Abraham, Williams, and Jenkin = Messrs Haigh, Bishoff, and Muir; Earl of Dunbar = Fitzallan; Marian = Mrs Hield.

On June 7th, Horn, from Drury Lane, and Miss Byfeld, from Covent Garden, opened a six nights engagement in *Le Nozze di Figaro*.

The opera of *Artaxerxes* was produced on July 1st (1830), with Edmunds in the title rôle. Artaban = Reynoldson; Arbaces = G. Horncastle; Mandane = Miss Byfeld (who had stayed on, after her starring engagement, as an ordinary member of the company); Semira = Miss Horncastle.

July 12th, *Beggars' Opera*. Macheath = G. Horncastle; Mat o' the Mint = Edmunds; Polly = Miss Byfeld.

On July 21st, was given what was stated in the bills to be the first performance in Scotland of Mozart's *Don Giovanni*. The cast was as follows:—Il Commendatore = James Horncastle; Don Giovanni = G. Horncastle; Don Ottavio = E. Edmunds; Masetto = J. Horncastle; Leporello = Reynoldson; Donna Anna = Mrs C. Bass; Donna Elvira = Miss Horncastle; Zerlina = Miss Byfield. This opera, which seems to have been excellently put on the stage, proved a great success, and ran for ten nights consecutively. On *Don Giovanni* being withdrawn, a piece was produced, called the *Elephant of Siam*, which proved an even greater success. The attraction was a real live elephant brought upon the stage, and so potent was this monster's power of attracting the public, that Mr Yates, who commenced a starring engagement on August 9th, had to take quite a second place on the bills.


On October 9th, Jolly, the leader of the Caledonian orchestra, took a benefit, when (by permission of Murray of the Theatre Royal) was played the *Merchant of Venice*, the part of Shylock by Pindar, the late leader of the Theatre Royal orchestra. Portia = Miss Mason; Nerissa = Miss Nicol.

On October 20th, H. Johnston commenced a four nights engagement, and on October 23rd Bass took his farewell benefit, and the season, which had proved a great success, closed.

CHAPTER XX.

MURRAY'S REIGN.

FIRST DECADE.

HE Patent granted to Henry Siddons in 1809, expired at the conclusion of the last season, and Mrs H. Siddons having paid up the entire purchase money (£42,000), the Theatre became her property. For some months Murray had been seriously indisposed, and it was rumoured that he intended to retire from the stage. On the other hand, it was asserted that his illness was an innocent fiction published to account for his being so much engaged between London and Edinburgh, arranging to have the Patent renewed (in his own name) and getting together a new company for the autumn. That he received a very tempting offer to act at Covent Garden is certain; but whatever may have been his first ideas regarding retirement or change of residence to London, it was soon known, that he had not only secured a lease of the Royal, but of the Caledonian (in conjunction with Yates) as well. In this way he obtained an entire monopoly of things theatric in Edinburgh. This arrangement undoubtedly had its advantages at the time; for Murray, as holder of the Patent, was the only person who was legally entitled to represent stage plays in Edinburgh, and so both houses could conveniently be utilised. Not only so; but as Murray arranged his seasons—winter at the Royal and summer at the “Adelphi” (as he now christened the Leith Walk house), a distinct difference in the class of entertainment at each house could be maintained without the rival interests clashing. That two theatres could be kept open simultaneously in Edinburgh at that time, is very questionable; and although Murray, in his later years especially, was not free from the accusation of mean management, yet, when we carefully review the long time of his lesseeship we cannot fail to arrive at the con-

clusion that his faults were almost entirely hidden—as far as the public was concerned—by rare administrative ability and a perfect knowledge of what was wanted of him at the hands of his audiences. Murray was in fact an eminently popular manager, during whose term of office the Edinburgh stage was maintained at a height of excellence which had no rival in the provinces.

Previous to opening the Royal for the winter season, very considerable alterations were carried out, both outside and inside. The stage seems to have been entirely renewed, while, what was described in the bills as a “new Grand Architectural Drop Scene,” from the brush of David Roberts, was exhibited. On Wednesday, November 17th 1830, the entertainments commenced by singing the National Anthem, the principal parts being taken by Messrs G. Horncastle, Reynoldson, Edmunds—all of the late Caledonian company—Hart, Miss Horncastle (also from the Caledonian), and Miss Tunstall; after which Miss Jarman delivered an occasional address, and the orchestra played a “new Grand Medley Overture,” composed and arranged for the occasion by James Dewar, leader and director of the orchestra. At the end of the overture, *The Honey-moon* was acted; the Duke Aranza = Waldron, from Manchester; the Count Montalban = Brindal, from the Haymarket; and Rolando = Green (light comedy), from Covent Garden. Mason, who had been re-engaged, played Lampedo, and Murray, Jaquez; while, of course, Miss Jarman gave her inimitable rendering of Juliana. During December, Ducrow gave a few of his famous posturing performances; on the 22nd of the same month Auber’s new opera, *La Fiancée*, was produced under the title of the *National Guard*, with a strong cast. The pantomime was *Mother Bunch*, the part of clown being taken by Taylor, who had become an established favourite here. Seeing that the company was vocally very strong, it is not surprising that light opera almost nightly found a place in the bills, and in addition to the new opera mentioned above, there was brought out on February 7th, an adaptation, by Rophino Lacy, of *Cinderella*, a medley work made up of selections from several of Rossini’s operas. It proved very popular, running some thirty nights. Messrs G. Horncastle, Reynoldson, Edmunds, Murray, and Hart were in the cast. On March 19th Mozart’s *Don Giovanni*, adapted by Reynoldson, was splendidly produced. The Don = Horncastle; Don Ottavio = Edmunds; and Masetto = Murray. Four days previous to this (namely the 15th) the company had cause to regret the death, at an early age, of the popular actor Denham. He seems to have gone on the stage very early in life, and was pro-

bably not much over thirty when he died. He is described, by the only member of the company of 1830-1 who is still living, as having been a big burly man, and a sensible, useful all-round actor. In some parts there can be no doubt he was excellent. His King James in *Fortunes of Nigel* delighted Sir Walter Scott, while his Dandie Dinmont, Mucklebackit, (*Antiquary*), James Ratcliffe (*Heart of Midlothian*), King James (*Cramond Bridge*), Walter Logan (*Gilderoy*), and many others, were most highly thought of. Denham, it is perhaps worth noting, was educated at Heriot's Hospital. Murray gave a benefit for his widow and family on the 23rd of March, and the parts he had played for the previous ten years were transferred mostly to Power, a tall stout man and good actor, without, however, the finish of his predecessor. March 24th, was produced a new version of *Waverley*, adapted by Edward Ball, in which the character of Mrs Nosebag (played by Mrs Nicol) appears. Young made a farewell visit during the spring, his actual last appearance in Edinburgh being on Saturday April 9th, when he played *Hamlet*. A sketch called *Shakespeare's Dream*, illustrated by tableaux, was produced on April 16th, and became very popular. Edmund Kean paid a short visit in the beginning of May, and after the usual benefit season, the house closed on June 4th, being the hundred and sixty-third night of playing.

Murray having closed the doors of the Royal, lost no time in opening the Adelphi, for on June 7th, Buckstone's capital melo-drama of *Wreck Ashore*, was played, after which Les Mademoiselles Celeste and Constance, the well-known dancers, appeared. The whole performances were advertised as being under the direction of Mr O. Smith, acting manager, who was a melo-dramatic actor of very high standing in those days. His stay here only lasted, however, till the 27th. On the 6th of July Murray's co-lessee,* Yates, commenced an engagement lasting to the end of the season, during which he produced a romantic drama founded on Lord Byron's *Mazeppa*, and which had been playing in London most successfully during the same season; it proved a great attraction here:—*Poles*—The Castellan = Crisp; Count Premislas = Hemmings; Rudziloff = Bayne; Drolinski = Gardner; Officer = Gibson; Olinski = Miss Daly; Agatha = Mrs Daly; Zemilla = Miss Crisp. *Tartars*—*Mazeppa* = Yates; Abdar Khan = Pritchard; Thomar = Brunton; Zadac = Morris; Zembo = Stoker; Koscar = Miller; Oneiza = Miss C. Crisp. Almost

* For this season only.

nothing except melo-dramas and spectacle pieces were performed during the whole of the season, which lasted till September 10th.

The following season (1831-2) opened on October 3rd, with a performance of *Love in a Village*. Young Meadows = White, from the Theatre Royal, Manchester and York, his first appearance here ; Hawthorn = Martyn, from Bristol, also his first appearance ; Madge = Miss Atkinson, a pupil of White's ; and Rosetta = Miss Byfield, from Covent Garden, being her first appearance in this house. The following evening, in the *Merchant of Venice*, several other new members of the company made their Edinburgh *debut*. Antonio = Powell, from York ; Bassanio = Faucit ; and Shylock = Ternan, who became a prime favourite here. Power continued to fill Denham's old parts, but Edmunds, Horncastle, and Reynoldson, did not appear this season. During the greater part of the season Ternan and Pritchard divided the lead, and were succeeded by Diddear, a sound, although heavy actor ; John Mason and Gardner superseded Stanley, so long the favourite low comedian ; and Miss Mason divided the lead with Miss Jarman. On October 14th, *The Evil Eye*, a romantic musical drama, was produced, and acted some twenty-one nights during the season. On October 31st, *The Renegade*, a tragedy by the late Mr Maturin, author of *Bertram*, was announced for production for the first time on any stage. It had been sent by Sir Walter Scott to Murray some time before, and the success it attained, and, more particularly, the excellent criticisms it got, go to show it was worthy the recommendation of so great a man. But Murray's assumption that it had not been previously acted was rudely dispelled by the *Edinburgh Evening Post* of November 5th, which declared it had been frequently performed in Ireland some years previous. This statement being sufficiently proved, Murray publicly retracted the mistaken assertion he had made. The cast in Edinburgh was as follows :—*Christians*—Guiscard = Pritchard ; Romuald = Power ; Flodoard = Bevan ; Roberto = Miller ; Sismondi = Powell ; Matilda (mother of Guiscard) = Miss Jarman ; Volonia, her attendant = Miss Forsyth. The *Ottomans*—Osmyn, the Renegade = Ternan ; Syndarac = Faucit ; Murad = Peddie ; Selim = Thomas ; Ben Musaph = Brown ; Bentalib = Roberts. *Dominique the Deserter, and the Gentleman in Black*, came out on November 16th. In this Murray made a great hit as Dominique. It ran over thirty nights, and was often played afterwards. December 5th saw the production here of Macready's adaptation for the stage of Lord Byron's

Werner, Miss Paton gave a few performances during the month, and on the 19th, the Brothers Ridgway, famous pantomimists, made their first appearance here. On the 28th, the pantomime, *Harlequin Sinbad*, was produced ; some of the scenery was by Danson, from Ducrow's Amphitheatre, and the whole was produced under the direction of the Brothers Ridgway, the parts of harlequin, pantaloon, and clown, being filled by them ; columbine = Miss Fairbrother. It ran, although not consecutively, till February 4th, and seems to have been well received. During its run Signor de Begnis' Italian Opera Company gave several performances. February 8th, Lord Leveson Gower's tragic drama of *Catharine of Cleves* was produced, being followed on the 21st by the first performance here of Buckstone's burlesque *Billy Taylor*. On the 13th, Edmund Kean commenced a short, and, as it proved, his last engagement in Edinburgh. He seems to have been very ill while here, and could not play every night. He appeared in *Richard III.*, *Macbeth*, *Othello*, *New Way to Pay Old Debts*, *Hamlet*, and on February 27th, in a selection of scenes from several Shaksperian plays, it being his last appearance in Edinburgh. He was forty-six years of age at this time, and in little over a year (May 15th 1833) he died. Douglas Jerrold's *Rent Day* was still in its first season at Drury Lane, when, on March 13th, Murray had it produced here. Tableaux based on Wilkie's famous pictures "The Rent Day" and "Distraining for Rent" were introduced during the performance. The cast was as follows :—Squire Grantley = Faucit ; Old Crumbs = Mason ; Martin Heywood = Ternan ; Toby Heywood = Power ; Bullfrog = Murray ; Farmer Beanstalk = Roberts ; Polly Briggs = Miss Stoker ; Rachel Heywood = Miss Jarman. The *Rent Day* ran for over twenty nights. It may be interesting to some to learn that, on March 26th, the "Edinburgh Shakspeare Club" patronised the performance, when *The Rent Day* and *Comedy of Errors* were played. Power, the Irish comedian, commenced his first engagement here on April 2nd, and on the 16th, Wilson, the singer, reappeared in his native town, covered with London honours. A new national drama, entitled *A Week at Holyrood*, and expressly licensed for the Theatre Royal, having never been played before, was produced on the 28th April, but does not seem to have been a success. The cast was as follows :—King James the Sixth = Power ; Earl of Moray = Ternan ; Gordon, Earl of Huntley = Faucit ; Earl of Bothwell = Bevan ; Chancellor Maitland = Roberts ; Sir Robert Laurie of Maxwelton = Mason ; Wemyss of Logie = Pritchard ; Host of the

Blue Lion = Miller ; Philip, his son = Stoker ; Miles Paunch = Murray ; M'Dirk = Martyn ; Taggart = Thomas ; Skiendhu = Peddie ; Anne of Norway, Queen of Scotland = Mrs Stanley ; Lady Magdaline Gordon = Mrs Faucit ; Alice = Miss Fairbrother ; Mary, daughter to Miles Paunch = Miss Stoker ; Mistress Margaret Twinstoun = Miss Jarman. An event of decided interest was the reappearance for the *last* time of Mrs Henry Siddons, who gave her assistance on the occasion of Murray's benefit, May 26th. *The School for Scandal* was performed, in which Mason played Sir Peter ; Murray, Sir Benjamin Backbite ; Ternan, Joseph ; Pritchard, Charles ; Mackay, Crabtree ; Stanley, Moses ; and Mrs Siddons, (her great impersonation), Lady Teazle.

The winter season proper finished on June 2nd 1832, but instead of the Adelphi opening, an announcement appeared that, in consequence of the protraction of the season at Covent Garden Theatre (through the success of the *Hunchback*), several performers engaged for the Adelphi could not appear. A summer season therefore commenced at the Royal on June 4th (Monday), and in the bills it was stated that the shareholders of the Adelphi would be placed on the free list of the Royal. Weekes, who had formerly been a member of the stock company, appeared as a star, with his name in large letters on the playbill of the opening night, in the part of Cornelius O'Dedimus in *Man and Wife*. Miss Jarman and Mr and Mrs Yates both paid short visits ; and on July 2nd, Miss Fanny and Charles Kemble commenced a twelve nights engagement previous to their departure for America.

The production of the *Hunchback* on July 3rd was an important event, as Miss Fanny Kemble appeared in her original part of Julia, and Charles Kemble in his of Sir Thomas Clifford. The remainder of the cast was as follows :—Helen = Miss Mason ; Lord Tinsel = John Mason ; Master Walter = Diddear ; Modus = Murray ; Master Wilford = Bevan ; Gaylove = Shepherd ; Fathom = Gardner ; Thomas = Power ; Sampson = Miller. This "tacked on" season, as it may be called, closed on July 28th, and on the 30th the Adelphi opened with two new plays, *Eugene Aram* and *The School for Courtiers*, the latter for the first time on any stage. *Eugene Aram* proved decidedly successful, but the hit of the season was Planché's "infernally original and exceedingly *imp*-probable burlesque operetta" *The Olympic Devils*, which Madam Vestris had brought out with such success in London. Gordon, who had painted the scenery there, was employed in the same capacity here. Miss Byfeld

played Orpheus ; Murray, Pluto ; Miss Mason, Proserpine ; and Miss Newton, Eurydice. It was played some twenty-five times during the season. Sheridan Knowles' appearance on September 6th, along with Miss Ellen Tree, was the only other event of importance, and the season closed on September 29th with the manager's benefit. It had been, he said in his speech, a successful season, notwithstanding the general depression in the theatrical world. The following extract is from the same address :—

“ I would now, ladies and gentlemen, conclude, did I not feel that I have a delicate and painful duty to discharge, and in the performance of which I must throw myself upon your kindness and consideration. It is well known that, at one period, the Edinburgh Theatre owed its existence to the success of what was called the ‘Waverley dramas,’ and my silence upon the recent loss our country has sustained might be misinterpreted. That great man, whose name now fills every mouth from the peer to the peasant, was peculiarly the object of reverential regard to the members of the Scottish stage ; for to the success which attended the dramatic adaptations from his splendid works, aided by his powerful influence and assistance, we owe the establishment of that fund, the first anniversary of which he immortalised by declaring himself the author of Waverley, and to which the poor, sick, and disabled actor, when incapacitated from fretting his brief hour upon the stage, can look for subsistence. To eulogise such a name as Sir Walter Scott's is unnecessary—were it, this is not the place, nor am I the person competent to do so ; but the moment rapidly approaches when the Edinburgh Theatre will seize the opportunity of testifying, by more than words, its respect for the memory of its illustrious benefactor.”*

Several important additions were made to the company in 1832-3. Barrett, heavy man and Irish parts, from Theatre Royal, Liverpool ; Lacy, afterwards, and still so well known as Walter Lacy ; Lloyd, who had made his Edinburgh *debut* under Bass in 1829 ; E. Edmunds ; and Webster, for second old men, from Liverpool. It is interesting to note that no fewer than three of these artistes are alive at the present time, namely, Walter Lacy, Edmunds, and Lloyd. The last-named was an exceedingly droll performer ; a genuine low comedian of the old-fashioned Buckstone school of humour. He was not, however, a character actor, and lacked the power of concealing his identity, owing partly to strong peculiarities of voice and manner. But he was a finished actor in his own way, and when occasion demanded, could tone down his fun and act with skill and good effect. Edmunds gave up the stage very soon after this, and took to the profession of music, of which, more especially in the vocal department, he has long been a successful and honoured member.

The season 1832-3 opened so early as October 1st, but nothing requiring record occurred till November 9th, when Sheridan Knowles' masque,

* It does not appear, however, that it ever did.

The Vision of the Bard, written "in honour of the Genius of the Minstrel of the North," was produced, Ternan appearing as the "Bard," and Miss Jarman as "Scotia." According to the programmes, "the vision concludes with the assemblage of the various characters of the pageant at a jubilee supposed to be held at the ruins of Abbotsford in the year 3664 in honour of the memory of Scotia's minstrel." It is astonishing to find that such stuff ran for some fifteen nights.

After a month of Italian opera, the pantomime of the *Dragon of Wantley* was produced on December 31st. J. Ridgway was Harlequin; T. Ridgway, Clown; Wilcox, Pantaloon; Miss E. Lancaster, Columbine. It was played twenty-four times. On January 19th, for the first time for forty years, was revived Milton's *Comus*. Ternan took the title rôle; Edmunds, that of principal Bacchanal; and Miss Jarman played Emilia. The programme on that evening consisted, besides the masque, of a two act farce and the pantomime. *Comus* was a success, and ran for nine nights. The famous harpist Bochsa gave one night's performance in the Theatre, February 9th, after which engagements were completed by Power, T. P. Cooke, James Russell (who seems to have confined himself to acting in farces, and giving imitations), the African Roscius, Macready, and Miss Inverarity. On the last night of the season (May 8th), Murray being in London could not address the audience, as was his wont on the termination of each season; but he stated, in a short address published in the playbill, that the Theatre had struggled during the last two years through a time of unexampled depression, with better fortune than most of its compeers.

In the rhyming address with which he opened the Adelphi on May 25th 1833, reference was made to the death of Kean. Several old hands reappeared during the summer season. These included Diddear, Pritchard (who only played a few nights and then quitted the Edinburgh boards), Montague Stanley (announced as from Drury Lane, his first appearance these three years), Miss Cleaver (from York), and Mrs Macnamara (also from York). The latter lady came to play first old women in place of Mrs Nicol, who was now getting old and unfit for exertion, although she did not finally leave the stage until the following winter season. Mrs Macnamara was an excellent actress, and will be remembered as having been the original Mrs Bouncer in *Box and Cox* at the London Lyceum some time after this. New members added to the company included J. G. Barratt, from Theatre Royal, Glasgow, who

played old men ; Frazer, a vocalist, from Bath ; and Hudson, walking gentleman and tenor vocalist, from Newcastle, and who afterwards became an excellent Irish comedian.

The season opened on May 25th with Miss Fanny Ayton as the special attraction. Jerrold's pleasant comedy of *Nell Gwynne* was first produced here on June 1st with the following cast :—Charles the Second = Pritchard ; Sir Charles Berkeley = Shaw ; Charles Hart = Hudson ; Major Mohun = Adderly ; Betterton = Roberts ; Joe Haynes = Barrett ; Counsellor Crowsfoot = J. G. Barratt ; Stockfish = Peddie ; Orange Moll = Lloyd ; Mrs Snowdrop = Mrs Macnamara ; Nell Gwynne = Miss Fanny Ayton. A drama expressly translated for this Theatre, called *Philippé*, was brought out on July 15th, and on the 24th of August the popular melodrama *Jonathan Bradford* was performed for the first time here. In the character of a runaway apprentice Lloyd sang a parody on "The Sea, The Sea," called "The Sea, the sea, the hugly sea." The scenery in the piece was very elaborate ; one of the "sets" comprising a section of the "George" Inn, consisting of four separate rooms exposed at one time, of which there is an elaborate woodcut on the playbill. Sheridan Knowles and Miss Ellen Tree opened a short engagement on September 2nd with a performance of *The Wife*, the first time of its being played here. The season closed on the 21st with Murray's benefit, but, curiously, his address, which was delivered as usual, is not included in Bertram's little volume,* which now-a-days is so highly prized (and priced) by collectors.

The Royal opened on October 5th 1833 with *Love in a Village*, Wilson playing Hawthorn. White, who had not been included in the past season's company, reappeared, playing Young Meadows. In the list of the company for this season Mason's name, so long associated with Edinburgh theatricals, is wanting, and does not reappear.

Balls, who hailed from Drury Lane, appears to have been an excellent light comedian. Langley, who also made his first appearance this season, did not remain long ; but in after years, it may be noted, he became a great favourite in Aberdeen and Glasgow. Although Mrs Nicol's name was printed as one of the company, she did not act often, Mrs Macnamara taking nearly all her parts. Her farewell benefit was 10th April 1834. She had then been twenty-seven years before the Edinburgh public, and during that time had certainly worked both hard and well. Montague

* The Farewell and Occasional Addresses delivered by W. H. Murray, Esq., &c., 1851.

Stanley assumed juvenile lead this season, and continued a member of the company until his final retirement from the stage. Thomas Stuart, who was lead, became, in after years, a member of the London Adelphi company, and was a careful, although dull actor.

The first production of importance was Auber's *Fra Diavolo*, which, with Wilson, Murray, Morley (from Covent Garden), and Miss Byfeld in the cast, was well received, and ran seven nights. On November 18th a pantomimic ballet d'action called *The Gnome*, afforded the brothers Ridgway an opportunity of showing off their antics; and on the 30th the London Adelphi interlude called *P. P.; or, the Man and the Tiger*, commenced a most successful run of over thirty nights. Its success was largely due to the admirable acting of Murray as Simon Buckskin, and Balls as Squire Splasher. On December 24th the pantomime of *Man in the Moon* was played. J. Ridgway, Harlequin; T. Ridgway, Clown; and Mademoiselle Gilbert from Drury Lane (her first appearance here), Columbine. The pantomime ran some twenty-three nights. That excellent farce, *My Wife's Mother*, was produced on March 15th, with Murray as Jeremiah Foozle, and Mr Budd by Montague Stanley. At Miss Byfeld's benefit on April 16th Henry E. Dibdin, the youngest son of C. Dibdin jun., made one of his first public appearances in this city. He had been a pupil of Bochsa, the great harpist, and had come to Edinburgh at the beginning of 1833 in order to follow his profession.

Master Gustavus V. Brooke, the infant phenomenon (afterwards the well-known tragedian), appeared on May 2nd. The Theatre, after being open for one hundred and eighty-nine nights, closed on June 2nd.

So important an event as Mrs Nicol's last benefit must not be passed over unnoticed. It took place on April 10th, 1834, when she appeared in no less than three characters. The first piece was the *Rivals*. Mrs Malaprop = Mrs Nicol; Acres = Murray; Captain Absolute = Balls; Sir Anthony Absolute = Mackay; David = Lloyd. After which the operetta of *No, No, No*, Mrs Deborah Doublelock = Mrs Nicol; the performance finishing with *Raising the Wind*. Jeremy Diddler = Balls; Sam = Lloyd; Peggy = Mrs Elliot; and Miss Durable = Mrs Nicol. According to the bill of the play for the evening, Miss Durable was the first part Mrs Nicol played in Edinburgh. This must have been in 1806,* but the exact date of it is not recorded in any available source of information. Mrs Nicol,

* See page 250.

who succeeded Mrs Charteris in the old women line of characters, had been originally a domestic servant.* She secretly indulged her passion for the stage by acting in an amateur club; her mistress finding this out, and approving of her desire to adopt the profession, afforded her material aid. When Mrs Nicol came to Edinburgh, her husband, who was a printer by trade, obtained employment in one of the large printing establishments in the city. They had a large family; several daughters, besides the famous Miss Nicol, having a considerable connection with the drama in Edinburgh. They seem to have been very happy, and were highly respected by all who came in contact with them. Mrs Nicol was an admirable actress of old women, and having the opportunity of being the original in Edinburgh of many good characters, invariably distinguished herself.

On June 7th 1834, the Adelphi opened with a new burletta in two acts called *The Gipsies*. The company got together for this summer season was particularly good, and introduced several artistes who became great favourites. Coveney, who came from the Haymarket, and had started life as a compositor, had thirteen children, several of whom took to the stage with success. On the 11th a new operetta called *Jessie, the Flower of Dumblane, or, The Smugglers of the Glen*, Jessie by Miss Coveney, in which character she sang "The Banners of Blue," "Lassie, wad ye lo'e me," and "The Banks of Allan Water." The plot seems to have been very much in the conventional style, and may almost be traced by a perusal of the list of characters:—The Lord Dumblane, disguised as Roderick the Painter = Hudson, with song, "Jessie, the Flower of Dumblane;" Ranald, factor to former = Faucit; Jamie, servant to Ranald = Power; Stern, a smuggler = Coveney; Dirk, ditto = Hart, with song "The Sea;" Maggie, a Scotch lassie = Miss Newton, with songs. It ran sixteen nights.

June 16th, first appearance this season of Edmunds, not, however, as an ordinary member of the company, but as a star; and first appearance here of Mrs Edmunds, late Miss Cawse, the piece being *The Barber of Seville*, Edmunds playing the Count; Hart, the Music Master; Murray, Figaro; and Mrs Edmunds, Rosina. Mr and Mrs Edmunds took their benefit on the 28th, playing Paul and Virginia respectively in the piece of that name—it being their last appearance on the boards of an Edinburgh Theatre. Mrs Edmunds, who was born in 1808, seems

* See "Genuine Gossip by an Old Actress," in the *Era*, 1853, and April 16th, 1881.

to have shown proof of musical talent very early in life. After being under several distinguished masters, including Sir George Smart, she had the good fortune to receive a very flattering criticism from the composer Weber. She first appeared on the stage at Covent Garden in 1826, and during the following few years sang in a large number of operas.

Buckstone's burletta, *The Convent of St Eloi; or, the Pet of the Petticoats*, which had been originally produced at Drury Lane, made its appearance here on the 30th June; Miss Coveney making a great hit as Paul. Power, who was a tall, stout man, played Madame La Grosse, and the child's part of Zoe is put down as being played by Mademoiselle Petite. This was in all probability Miss Harriet Coveney, who is still on the London boards. The casting of Power in such a part as Madame almost justifies a suspicion that the performance was pretty coarse; the piece ran, however, for eighteen nights. Other parts in the cast were:—The Chevalier St Pierre = Montague Stanley; Bonilli = Coveney; Job, head gardener = Murray; Zephyr = Lloyd; Sister Vinaigre = Mrs Macnamara; Louise = Miss Jane Coveney.

Diddear reappeared on July 9th, his first part being Sir Edward Mortimer. Five days after, Miss Huddart made her first appearance here. This clever actress (afterwards Mrs Warner) was cut down by a lingering disease in the midst of her popularity and her struggles to maintain her family. July 26th, for the first time in Edinburgh, the drama in three acts, *Hofer, the Tell of the Tyrol*, Diddear and Miss Huddart taking the chief parts. August 5th, the new interlude of *Twelve Precisely*, in which Miss Coveney played five parts. It ran thirteen nights, and it may be mentioned that among so many long runs the old burletta *Midas*, with Miss Coveney as Apollo, was played nineteen times. *Olympic Revels*, by Planché, was frequently underlined but not produced. Miss Huddart's engagement was immediately followed, on August 18th, by the appearance of Miss Ellen Tree, who opened in *As You Like It*. Diddear played Jaques; Addison, Adam; Hudson, Amiens (with songs, his first appearance in the part); Montague Stanley, Orlando; Lloyd, Touchstone (his first appearance in that character); Miss Ballin (for this night only), Sylvius; Miss Newton, Audrey; and Miss Tree, Rosalind. September 26th—the ninety-sixth of the season—Murray took his benefit. In his speech or “farewell address” he gratefully acknowledged the great success of the season. During the ninety-six nights six hundred and sixty-one acts had been performed,

averaging nearly seven each night ; and of the plays performed, twenty were entirely new to the Edinburgh stage.

Some important alterations were made in the company for the season 1834-5. On the opening night a new tenor, Barker, made his first appearance on any stage, playing Tom Tug in the *Waterman*. Walker (bass), who had been one of the members of the orchestra of the English Opera House, Miss Rankley, leading lady, from the Theatre Royal, Exeter, and Mrs Roberts, from Cheltenham, also joined this season. Miss Nicol, after an absence of eleven years, returned to take up her mother's parts, which, since that lady's retirement, had been played by Mrs Macnamara. Miss Nicol was an excellent actress, and in her own line of characters (old women) was probably unsurpassed in her time. Her impersonation of Mrs Hardcastle, Miss Lucretia Mactab (*Poor Gentleman*), Madam Mag ('*Twas I*), and in fact of all parts of the kind, was perfect.

In the opening piece for the season (November 8th), *Laugh When You Can*, Miss Nicol played Miss Gloomly ; Bonus = Mackay ; Sambo = Lloyd ; Mortimer = Maddocks, from Theatre Royal, York, his first appearance here ; Mrs Mortimer = Mrs Roberts ; Dorothy = Miss Mattley, from the Haymarket, her first appearance here ; and Emily = Miss Rankley.

November 13th, *Guy Mannering*. Henry Bertram = Barker (first time) ; Gabriel = Walker, his first appearance on any stage ; Meg Merri-les = Mrs Hield ; Lucy Bertram = Miss Coveney ; Julia = Miss Newton. On the 20th it was repeated, the part of Julia being taken by Miss Novello, from the English Opera House, her first appearance here. A new interlude called *102 ; or, My Great-great-grandfather*, was produced on the 28th, in which Murray made a great hit by his extraordinary acting as a veteran of 102 years of age. Addison, Power, Graham, and Miss Percival played his son, grandson, great-grandson, and great-great-grandson respectively, the other parts being cast as follows :—François = Lloyd ; Madame Leroud = Miss Nicol ; Madame Louise = Miss Ellen Coveney ; Isabel = Miss Novello. It was played some fourteen nights during the season.

On December 2nd, Buckstone's comedy *Married Life*, produced originally at the Haymarket during the previous summer ; in this Mackay and Mrs Hield played Mr and Mrs Coddle ; Montague Stanley and Miss Rankley, Mr and Mrs Lynx ; Lloyd and Miss Mattley, Mr and Mrs Dove ; Murray and Miss Novello, Mr and Mrs Younghusband ; and Addison and Miss Nicol, Mr and Mrs Dismal. A few days afterwards

this piece was placed at the conclusion of the evening's entertainment, and the bills of the day were headed "Married Life at Half Price." Miss Coveney, who had been ill, returned on the 10th, and played Gertrude in *Loan of a Lover*. *Everybody's Husband; or, Bigamy, Trigamy, and Quadrigamy*, a new farce, was produced on the 11th; and on the 26th a "New Grand Comic Christmas Pantomime called *Maggie Lauder; or, Harlequin and the Wizard*." The cast was really splendid. Clown, by Paulo, the famous exponent of the Grimaldi school, from Covent Garden; Pantaloon, by Barnes, probably the best of his own day, also from Covent Garden; Frampton made a capital Harlequin; while Miss Fairbrother, as Columbine, would have been difficult to improve upon. It ran till January 19th, not continuously, however. During its run Wilson, the tenor, gave a few performances, playing generally in the first piece, after which there would always be one, sometimes two farces or interludes; the evening's entertainment concluding with the Pantomime. For the sake of example it will be well to quote the heads of a few bills. January 5th, *Heart of Mid-Lothian*, operetta *The Picturesque*, and the Pantomime; January 10th, Planché's drama, *The Regent*, farce *Is He Jealous?* 102 (interlude), and the Pantomime! *The Haunted Chamber*, *The Lancers*, *The Highland Reel*, and the Pantomime constitute the following evening's amusements; and on the 13th, in addition to the Pantomime, *Guy Mannering* and *A Day after the Wedding*. These examples are sufficient to indicate our grandfathers' notions of an evening's pleasure, and it is worth while noting that the prices were—Boxes, 4s.; pit, 2s. 6d.; first gallery, 2s.; second gallery, 1s.; and the performance generally commenced at seven o'clock.

Wilson took his benefit on January 17th, playing Steady in *The Quaker*, after which *Everybody's Husband*, then a concert, consisting of ten items, and *Cramond Brig*. One of the numbers in the concert programme was a song by Stretton the bass, his first appearance in Edinburgh. Signor Emiliani, the violinist, appeared (for one night only) on the 21st, and on the 27th was produced Peake's new drama, *The Climbing Boy*. It was played nineteen times, Lloyd as Jack Rag making a great hit. Miss Nicol played Miss Prudence Strawberry; Miss Novello the part of Rosalie; and Miss Jane Coveney, the Climbing Boy. A hashed-up edition of Auber's *Gustavus of Sweden*, with music added from Rossini and Hérold, was given on February 7th; Montague Stanley probably made an acting part of the title rôle. A pas de deux was danced by Frampton

and Miss Fairbrother, and a very peculiar feature was the admission, on payment of five shillings, of any one who was in ball dress, uniform, or "character," by the stage door to the masquerade scene which concluded the opera. Great care had been bestowed on the production, the scenery (by Jones) being very effective. Some sixteen nights completed its run.

Sinclair commenced a twelve nights engagement on the 23rd of February ; on March 3rd he played Francis Osbaldistone and Masaniello on the same evening. Visits from Charles Kean and Weekes completed the events of importance this season, which concluded on May 1st 1835, with Murray's benefit. On that evening Miss Coveney was announced as making her "last appearance on the Edinburgh stage." In his farewell address, Murray acknowledged having had a splendid season, so good, in fact, as to enable him to withdraw an application for a reduction of rent he had made to the trustees of Henry Siddons. The application had pretty nearly developed into a dispute, which might have ended in a rupture, all which, however, was prevented by the liberal patronage of the public ; at least so Murray said. The programme for this evening is perhaps worth giving :—" *The Marriage of Figaro* (three acts), after which a comic song by Lloyd ; Frampton and Miss Fairbrother danced the Tarantella ; the 'Bloom is on the Rye,' by Miss Jane Coveney ; and a favourite ballad by Stretton ; Murray next delivered his farewell address, after which *He Lies Like Truth* (interlude), then the ballad of the Mariners by Barker, song by Miss Mattley, and another dance by Frampton and Miss Fairbrother—the whole to conclude with the farce of *The Twa Ghaists*.

The Adelphi was opened on May 30th, with two pieces new to the Edinburgh stage, namely, *The Mystic Shade*, by James Serle, and Poole's *Turning the Tables*. In the former Watkins as Sir Marmaduke, Hield as Walton, Emery as Gripewell, Hughes as Phillip, and Miss Allison as Cicely, all made their first appearance here. The Emery mentioned above was in all probability the afterwards well-known Samuel Emery, son of the famous John Emery.*

Turning the Tables was played by Emery as Knibbs, Hield as Jeremiah Bumps, Lloyd as Jack Humphries, Miss Nicol as Mrs Humphries, and Miss Newton as Patty Larkins. Planché's comedietta, *My Friend the Governor*, was produced on June 13th, and ran twelve

* All the known facts point to this conclusion, although it is not certain.

nights. Of more interest was the first performance here on June 16th of *The Two Murderers; or, the Auberge des Adrets*, better known as *Robert Macaire*. Lloyd as Jacques Strop was a great success, his performance being described by living witnesses as ludicrous beyond description.* The cast was as follows:—Robert Macaire = Montague Stanley; Mr Gerald Dumont = Bayne; Mr Germeuil = Murray; Charles = Hudson; Pierre = Emery; Loupy (Sergeant) = Watkins; Clementine = Miss Allison; Marie = Mrs Hield. It ran nineteen nights. A piece was produced on the 18th, entitled *Jack Rag Out of Place*, by Selby. Its real name was *The Unfinished Gentleman*, but as Lloyd had made a great hit as Jack Rag in the *Climbing Boy*, Murray thought Jack Rag would prove a more attractive title, Lloyd taking the comic hero's part (originally called Bill Downey), and rechristening it as above. It was played sixteen times.

Miss Shirreff, who was an excellent vocalist, made her first appearance in Edinburgh on July 4th, her engagement extending over thirty-six nights. Mr and Mrs Keeley opened a twelve nights engagement with the production of Buckstone's *Isabella; or, Woman's Life*.

On September 4th, the occasion of Butler's benefit, Mrs Butler is announced as making her "first and only appearance in Edinburgh," the character she impersonated being that of Harriet in the *Dead Shot*.

On the 18th September Murray had again the pleasant task of thanking his patrons for a prosperous season.

The company got together for the season 1835-6 was a very large one, and included many valuable additions to the old stock. Among the new comers a few may be singled out for particular mention. George Ellis, walking gentleman, from the Haymarket, London, became well known in after years as a stage manager, notably with Charles Kean at the Princess's during the famous revivals. George Fisher, from the Victoria, London, who played old men's parts, was a useful, although by no means brilliant actor. He lived to a good old age, and at the time of his death, was an inmate of the short-lived dramatic college at Woking. His wife was engaged as leading lady, and was at that time both a handsome woman and good actress; but died very shortly after this season. Their son, George Fisher, who was a first-rate actor of Scotch parts, and a very fair general comedian, is better known to the present generation. Miss

* In the modern opera of *Erminie* we have a mild reproduction of the two thieves.

Hartley had got married during the summer to a tailor of the name of Turnbull, and appeared in all the matrimonial glory of her new name. Her husband, it may be observed, combined with his business the more artistic occupation of chorister in one of the city churches. Bedford, the tenor who had been engaged, was a brother of the famous Paul Bedford.

A considerable reduction in the prices of the seats was made this season. They were now as follows :—Boxes, 3s. ; Pit, 2s. ; Galleries, 1s., and 6d., no second price was taken, and the performances were announced to commence at eight o'clock. Although Murray reserved to himself the option of raising the prices again, should the expenses of his various engagements warrant the change, it is satisfactory to note that, except for the Italian opera evenings, the new scale of charges was not departed from. The season opened on November 7th with *The Rent Day*, and a farce *The Review*. Ellis appeared as Squire Grantley, Fisher as Old Crumbs, Montague Stanley as Martin Heywood, and Mrs Fisher as Rachel Heywood. On the 9th *Rob Roy* was played, Bedford appearing as Francis, Mrs Hield as Helen, and Miss Atkinson as Diana, being her first appearance here these four years, such being the playbill expression, in which the years of last appearing and present appearance must be reckoned to make the statement correct; Miss Atkinson's last appearance had really been in the spring of 1832, which, however, in theatrical parlance, may be counted as four years previous to November 1835. On the 12th *Robert Macaire* was played under that name; and on the 14th, *Roland, or Carte over Arm*, a comedietta, written by an Edinburgh gentleman, was played for the first time on any stage. This piece was interspersed with songs, and was played fourteen times. The cast was as follows :—Roland, a young Captain of Hussars, = M. Stanley; Dr Jeremiah Bouleau, Master of a Boarding School, = Murray; Coniac, attached to business and Nanon, = Lloyd; Nanon, niece to Dr Bouleau, = Miss Mattley; Gabrielle, a young Girl, = Miss Newton. Sinclair, the tenor, and young Brooke performed a few nights each, after which, on the 23rd, Sheridan Knowles and Miss Elphinstone commenced a six nights engagement. Planché's comedy, *The Court Beauties*, was produced on the 30th. New scenery, dresses, &c., were necessary, and were furnished on an excellent scale of completeness; but it is no disparagement to Murray to suppose that they cannot have been so elaborate as those used in London by Madame Vestris. That lady had obtained

special permission to copy portraits, furniture, &c., at Hampton Court, and she spared no expense in the work. Besides which some fine old madrigals by Wilbye, Cavendish, &c., were sung under the London management, but were not attempted here. Montague Stanley played the Duke of Buckingham; Hield, Charles the Second; Murray, Sir George Hewitt, a dandy of 1675; and Mrs Fisher, Nell Gwynn. *Court Beauties*, consisting of but two acts, and two other pieces of similar length, were played on the same evening, besides Monsieur Sylvian dancing a "pas de deux" and a "pas seul" between the pieces. *Court Beauties* ran eight nights.

James Russell gave his vocal entertainment on December 2nd; and on the 7th Signor De Begnis commenced a series of Italian opera performances on four nights of each week.

The drama, *The Spirit of the Rhine*, produced December 15th, may be remembered as the piece in which Miss Novello introduced the ballad of "My Beautiful Rhine," in the part of Irma, a character in which Mrs Honey in London obtained great celebrity for her rendering of the same song. On the same evening the farce, then called "an interlude," of *Hunting a Turtle* was performed. It was a poor piece of work, and, although splendidly acted by Murray, Stanley, Lloyd, and Mrs Fisher, did not take during its first season; but it afterwards became a favourite.

On December 28th, the "Christmas" pantomime of *Gretna Green* was produced. Scenery by James and William Mason. Murray, Power, and Stewart, were in the opening, and Miss Fairbrother was Columbine; Sutton, Harlequin; Bartlett, Pantaloon; and Southey, Clown. The last mentioned, who was Pyrotechnist to Vauxhall Gardens, London, gave a display of fireworks on the Mound upon the night of his benefit (January 21st). The pantomime ran twenty nights.

A decided novelty was given on January 28th 1836, when *Rob Roy* was played, with Wilson, the eminent tenor, in the title rôle. Bedford, of course, played Francis; Mrs Hield, Helen; and Miss Novello, Diana. Mackay was the Bailie; Murray, the Major; and Lloyd, Owen. T. P. Cooke commenced an engagement on February 1st, and on the 4th played his original part of Robert Macaire, for the first time in Edinburgh. On the 23rd, the Grand Lodge of Freemasons, headed by the Grand Master, patronised the performance at the Theatre. March 3rd, "for the first time in this city, the popular new drama,"

called *King O'Neill*, originally produced at Covent Garden. Tyrone Power, who was starring here at the time, played Captain O'Neill, his original part. Charles Kean opened on March 7th, playing Hamlet; Ophelia, by Miss Novello. He took his benefit on the 21st, being the last night of his engagement; on which occasion, the crowd being great, tickets were issued for the orchestra at box prices. This probably gave the suggestion for an innovation in the classification of the seats, inaugurated during the succeeding summer season at the Adelphi. Owing to the success of Kean's performances he was re-engaged for six nights more, commencing March 24th, with *King John*. Mrs Honey played Irma in *The Spirit of the Rhine*, on April 11th, being her first appearance here, and at the conclusion of her twelve nights engagement, Wilkinson, the leader of the orchestra, took his benefit, at which H. E. Dibdin played a harp solo. From the 30th the Theatre closed until May the 11th, on the evening of which day it reopened with *Guy Mannering*. Henry Bertram by Binge, from the Theatres Royal, Bath and Manchester, it being his first appearance here; and Lucy Bertram by Miss Glossop, from Braham's Theatre, London, her first appearance here. A more interesting "first appearance," however, took place on the 18th, when, for Roberts' benefit, *Douglas* was played, the part of Young Norval being taken by "a young gentleman of Edinburgh, pupil of Mr Roberts, and his first appearance on any stage." This was William Gourlay, afterwards a well known actor and manager in Edinburgh, and, perhaps, the only genuine Bailie Nicol Jarvie the present generation has seen. He last appeared as the Bailie at the splendid production of *Rob Roy* by M'Neill at the Princess's Theatre (March 20th to April 1st 1882), very soon after which he died.

Lloyd took his benefit on May 23rd, playing (for the first time) Goldfinch in *Road to Ruin*, and Othello in the travestie of that name. Murray played Iago; Hield, Cassio; Brabantio, for this night only (afterwards by Stewart), Mackay; Desdemona, Miss Newton. On the 27th, at Murray's benefit, this piece was again played, the list of characters, with the remarks upon each, being changed. Othello was now Otello, Big Drum in the — Regiment of Infantry; Murray appeared as Highago, and so on. The scenes were all localised, and in this particular the dialogue would no doubt follow suit. On June 1st, *The Jewess*, translated by Watkins Burroughs, was brought out with great splendour, Burroughs and his wife sustaining the principal parts.

In his address at the conclusion of the season (June 21st) Murray said :—

“The final dropping of the curtain this evening will balance accounts with us for the winter season, and in laying the annual statement before you, I gladly acknowledge Murray & Company debtors to Messrs Box, Pit, & Galleries for a very successful campaign. When I commenced my labours, I adventured upon the somewhat hazardous experiment of reducing the prices of admittance, at the same time pledging myself that the said reduction should not deteriorate the style of our amusements; and if you will oblige me by casting a retrospective glance upon the season, and recollect that, during its progress, Sheridan Knowles, the first dramatist of the day, and one well worthy of a brighter era in our dramatic literature, has been before you, accompanied by his fair and talented pupil, Miss Elphinstone. When you consider, &c., &c., . . . I hope you will allow that I have redeemed my pledge. I have resolved to adhere to the existing arrangement during the summer, convinced, that if at any time I find that the reduction militates against my forming such a resident company, or the engagement of such occasional visitors as you are entitled to expect, you will allow me to amend my libel, and add and eik by resuming the first and second prices as formerly. . . . I know the general demand for novelty; but in the recruiting department, my difficulties increase as the London theatres multiply. When I started in management* there were about six open nightly; there are now, I believe, seven and twenty; add to which the American manager drains us terribly. No sooner do we poor manufacturers work the raw material into something like Richard, Shylock, or Othello, than off it goes for the foreign market—and on we go, like the witches in Macbeth—

“‘Double, double, toil and trouble,’” etc.

The Adelphi was opened on June 25th, extensive alterations having been made. New staircases and lobbies had been built, new seats put in, and twenty-one orchestra stalls had been added. The price of these was fixed at 4s.; while the boxes or dress circle was 3s.; the pit, 2s.; gallery, 6d. Murray spoke a rhyming address which finished as follows :—

“This night re-rigged and manned, we hoist the sail,
Giving our mimic canvas to the gale;
Smile on our humble efforts, nor refuse
Your kind assistance to our summer cruise.
Is all prepared?—(voice within)—‘Aye, aye, Sir, tight and yare;’
Then, carpenter, let go the painter there.
Now, friends, three cheers to waft us from the shore,
Lads in the main-topgallants—to the galleries)—‘One cheer more.’”

On July 4th Miss Adami, from Dublin, made her first appearance here, playing Eudiga in *Charles the Twelfth*, and five nights afterwards she is described in the bills “Mrs Aylmer, late Miss Adami.” On

* He must here refer to 1815, not to 1830.

July 11th Morris Barnett, from Braham's Theatre, made his first appearance here. Barnett was a very excellent impersonator of Frenchmen, and was the author, among other pieces, of *The Serious Family*, an adaptation from the same French original that long afterwards supplied Burnand with the *motif* of the *Colonel*. His first appearance here was as Monsieur Jacques in the farce of that name written by himself. It was so much liked that it was played some eighteen times. Several other new plays were produced during the summer, among the more important of which may be mentioned :—*Golden Farmer*, July 20th, a melo-drama, played nine times ; July 29th, *Battle of Austerlitz*, described as a "military anecdote," in which Murray acted the Emperor Napoleon, fifteen nights ; August 8th, *A Day Well Spent*, a farce which in after years, when Wyndham became manager, was sometimes rechristened after two of the comedians in the company. For instance, in the very last bill printed for the Adelphi Theatre (May 23rd, 1853), it appeared as *Wyndham and Mungall out for a Lark*. August 13th, *Delusion*, founded on the "Diary of a Late Physician," twelve times ; August 22nd, an original drama written for this Theatre by an Edinburgh lady, called *St Dru, the Accused* ; September 8th, *Harlequin Hoax*, originally written by Tom Dibdin—the scheme of this piece was a supposed pantomime rehearsal. On this occasion Ellsgood played Clown ; Stewart, Pantaloon ; Sutton, Harlequin ; and Miss Rekey, Columbine. September 12th, *House Room*, twelve nights ; September 20th, *The Highland Widow*, played for the first time, being taken from Scott's "Chronicles of the Canongate." This last piece ran nine nights, but was seldom revived. The cast was as follows :—Captain Grant = Crisp ; Mr Mackenzie = Roberts ; Allan Breack Cameron = Hutchings ; Corporal Colin = Aitkin ; Michael Tyrie = Stewart ; Dick Luckless = Murray ; Hamish MacTavish = Montague Stanley ; Elspat MacTavish, the Highland Widow = Mrs Fisher ; Ella = Miss Newton. Upon the last night of the season (October 14th) Murray played the character of Sir John Falstaff in *Henry IV.*, and in the course of his farewell address cordially thanked his patrons for the very prosperous season just concluded. He also alluded to the number of new plays produced, namely, thirty-six in a season of ninety-six nights—a very good number, surely, and one which indicates the amount of work actors had to get through in those days.

On November 12th 1836, the Royal opened with *Love in a Village* and *High Life below Stairs*. The house had been repainted, a new proscenium erected, and a very strong company engaged. On the opening

night Manvers, a tenor from Covent Garden, made his first appearance as Young Meadows to the Lucinda of Mrs Parsons Crowe, soprano, from Braham's Theatre; while Rosetta was played by Miss P. Horton, a charming contralto and comedy actress from the Haymarket and English Opera House. She afterwards married Reed, musical director at the Haymarket, and it need scarcely be added that they founded that most delightful entertainment known as German Reed's. In the farce (*High Life*) Robert Roxby, from Manchester and Scarborough, made his first appearance, playing My Lord Duke. This light comedian only remained a few weeks in Edinburgh; he afterwards became an actor of some note in London, particularly at the Lyceum under Vestris, and was a brother of Beverley, the famous scene painter.

On the following evening (Monday 14th) Mrs Manvers, a very good heavy actress, from the Queen's, London, appeared as Meg Merrilees; and Miss Palmer (wrongly described in the bills as Mrs), a dancer from Glasgow, as Flora. Another new comer this season was Smythson, son of Ben Smythson, the well-known proprietor of an amateur theatre in London, and brother of Marcus Smythson, for many years chorus master under Costa, at Covent Garden and Exeter Hall. Mrs Fisher divided the lead with Miss Vining, from the Theatre Royal, Brighton; while Gourlay played utility this season.

Of new plays the first of importance was Sergeant Talfourd's tragedy *Ion*, on December 1st. On December 28th a pantomime, *The Silver Fountain*, was produced. Pantaloon = R. Power; Clown = Ellsgood; Harlequin = Bologna; Columbine = Mrs Morris. It ran some seventeen nights. January 21st 1837, Barnett's fine opera, *The Mountain Sylph*, was produced. The scenery was painted by Jones (afterwards of Drury Lane) and Gordon; ballets arranged by Ellsgood. Manvers took the part of Donald; Lloyd, that of Christie; and Miss P. Horton, Æolia, the Mountain Sylph. It was very successful, and ran fourteen nights.

On February 4th *The Tempest* was revived, in which Miss P. Horton made a great hit as Ariel. Prospero = Montague Stanley; Ferdinand = Graham; Stephano = Mackay; Trinculo = Lloyd; Caliban = Murray; and Miranda = Miss Vining.

On the occasion of Stretton's benefit (February 27th) Miss Clara Novello, the celebrated vocalist, took part in a concert between the plays; and the season came to a successful termination on April 28th, with Murray's benefit, when *The Iron Chest* was played, with Charles Kean as

Sir Edward Mortimer, Montague Stanley as Wilford, and Miss Vining as Barbara.

The Adelphi was opened for one night (April 1st) by Ole Bull, the violinist, who gave a farewell concert there. The summer season commenced on June 10th with the singing of the National Anthem, the solo parts by Barker, the Misses Hyland, Miss Jane Coveney, Miss Newton, and Mr Crowe. Miss A. Hyland sang "My Beautiful Rhine" between the plays, and Miss Hyland made her first appearance here as Wilhelmina in *The Waterman*. The performance closed with a new comic ballet d'action called *Lisette*, produced under the superintendence of Monsieur Le Clerc. This gentleman had been ballet master and pantomimist in Covent Garden; his real name is said to have been Clark. He was a clever man, and had a large family on the stage, of whom Rose, Carlotta, and Charles* are still before the public. Miss Eliza Crisp had returned from Bath and shared the leading parts with Miss Vining.

The only stars this season were G. Bennett, tragedian, from Covent Garden (July 31st); Stretton (August 30th); and Wilson, his first appearance at this theatre (September 4th). Wilson played Donald in *The Mountain Sylph*; Rudolph, in *Der Freischütz*; Tom Tug, in *The Waterman*; and Dandie Dinmont, in *Guy Mannering* (September 21st). Mackay and Montague Stanley were likewise engaged as stars.

On Friday, June 23rd, the Theatre was closed on account of the death of William IV., but was reopened on the following night, when "God save the Queen" was sung, and Murray delivered a monody in memory of his late Majesty.

July 1st, for the first time on any stage, a new drama called *The Duke; or, The Night before the Battle*, translated from the French, expressly for this Theatre, by a gentleman of Edinburgh. It was spoken of very highly in a short-lived serial called the *Dramatic Spectator*, which was written by the late W. Logan, under the *nom de plume* of Poz, Quiz, and Co. Speaking of Charles Kean this publication said:—

"His chief admirers are people who seldom enter a playhouse, and those, seeing the plays for the first time in their lives, pay more attention to the poet than to the actor, yet, in retrospect, imagine that the actor is the party who has pleased them. We never have met with one who has been 'moved to tears' by this man's acting, nor do we marvel at it when

* Now in Daly's Company, New York.

we consider that with nature he has no connection whatever. He is a thing of study—mis-directed study. Apart from physical disqualification for the character, his Hamlet is a boisterous piece of mere acting, his Richard III. is generally acknowledged to be a failure, and his Othello is a fine piece of low comedy.”

On October 18th, Lloyd, for his own benefit, acted the part and sang the song of Jim Crow in the Adelphi drama of that name.* The season concluded on October 27th with Murray’s benefit, when he played Falstaff in *Merry Wives of Windsor*.

The season 1837-8 opened at the Royal on November 11th with *Merry Wives of Windsor*, the cast being almost the same as at Murray’s benefit the preceding month. Falstaff = Murray; Justice Shallow = Johnson; Master Slender = Lloyd; Mr Ford = Montague Stanley; Mr Page = Graham; Sir Hugh Evans = Mackay; Fenton = Tremaine; Simple = R. Power; Pistol = Moulton (from the Theatre Royal, Newcastle); Bardolph = Stewart; Nym = Peddie; John Rugby = Saunders; Mrs Ford = Miss Eliza Crisp; Mrs Page = Mrs W. H. Crisp; Anne Page = Miss Vining; Mrs Quickly = Miss Nicol. The famous Ducrow gave a performance on November 14th, and on the 16th Miss Davenport made her first appearance here in *The Manager’s Daughter*, a piece which had been written for her by Lancaster. November 27th, *She Stoops to Conquer*, with Lloyd as Diggory, Murray as Tony, and Mackay as Hardcastle, with, for the first time here, a melo-dramatic extravaganza, comprising scraps from “Pickwick;”—the immortal Pickwick himself being in the hands of Mackay; Jingle = Montague Stanley; Sam Weller = Lloyd; Mrs Bardell = Mrs Turnbull. This, the first of the Dickens adaptations that was played in Edinburgh, ran for eighteen nights.

On February 9th a performance was given, under the patronage of the Grand Lodge of Scotland, for the benefit of the “Freemasons’ School for Female Children.” Evidently “the Craft” had good intentions in those days, which, however, do not seem to have had much result. Sinclair was underlined for a short engagement, but from some cause he did not appear; and on March 22nd, Musgrave, the leader of the orchestra, took his benefit, on which occasion the Toy Symphony, by Haydn, was announced to be performed for the first time in Edinburgh! Four nights afterwards (26th) Montague Stanley took his farewell benefit, playing Richard III. (for the last time), Robert Macaire, and Splasher in *The*

* Rice, the original Jim Crow, had been underlined to appear this season, but did not do so.

Man and the Tiger. An engagement with Charles Kean opened on April 9th, and concluded with the season on the 28th of the same month, when Montague Stanley made his last appearance on any stage, playing Laertes, to Kean's Hamlet. Believing that the life of an actor was not consistent with a religious life, he sacrificed his profession to his conscience. After leaving the stage he gave lessons in drawing, elocution, fencing (at which he was very expert), and in playing the flute, besides following his favourite pursuit of painting, to which he latterly devoted himself entirely. He died of consumption in the Isle of Bute, May 4th 1844. He seems to have been of a very gentle and loveable nature, liked by all who knew him, and though, for obvious reasons, he mixed very little latterly with his fellow-actors, they all respected him as a good, conscientious man.*

Stanley seems to have been a sound, judicious actor, who never offended, and as might be expected from a man of reading and cultivation, his renderings were sensible and scholarly. At the same time he had his failings, among which could be reckoned coldness and stiffness in action. He was also inclined occasionally to substitute noise for real passion. There is no doubt, too, that with his growing disapproval of the stage his acting did not improve, for it is scarcely to be supposed that he could throw himself *con amore* into what he did at best from necessity and not from liking. One of his best parts was Robert Macaire, in which the mixture of broad farce and melo-drama seemed to suit him exactly.

Very little of importance has to be recorded of the summer season of 1838 at the Adelphi. Murray, looking in from a side door, apologised for interrupting the band in the performance of an overture, and then commenced his introductory speech, which it is unnecessary to quote. On May 28th a piece called *Rory O'More*, by Sam Lover, was played for the first time here. June 11th, Buckstone's *Rural Felicity* was produced; and on July 9th, Vining, from Covent Garden, made his first appearance in Edinburgh,† playing Gossamer in *Laugh when You Can*.

A month later (August 9th) Lytton Bulwer's *Lady of Lyons* was first performed in Edinburgh. Curiously it was only played four times during its first season. The cast was as follows :—Beauseant = Griffiths ; Glavis

* Messrs Lloyd and James Anderson have recently borne testimony to his high character and kindness of heart.

† So say the playbills ; but in all probability the Vining who was a member of the Company from 1806 to 1810 was one and the same person.

= G. Ellis ; Colonel Damas = Murray ; M. Deschappelles = Redford ; Claude Melnotte = Balls ; Major Desmoulins = M' Mahon ; Captain Gervais = R. Power ; Captain Dupont = Beckett ; Gaspar = Power ; Madame Deschappelles = Miss Nicol ; Pauline = Miss Julia Cruise ; Marian = Miss Ebsworth ; Widow Melnotte = Mrs Griffiths ; Janet = Mrs Redford. The season closed on September 8th, but reopened on September 12th, continuing till October 19th, and then finally closing with Murray's benefit.

The Royal opened for the winter season 1838-9 on November 10th, when, in addition to the stock company, Mr and Mrs Martyn (singers, bass and soprano) and Miss Inverarity (Mrs Martyn's sister, and also a good singer) were engaged. On the 14th, besides these extra hands, Templeton was engaged, and made his first appearance in Edinburgh, playing his original part of Elvino in *La Sonnambula* to the Lisa of Miss Inverarity. Ranger, from the Haymarket—a comedian of the Farren school—appeared on the 19th ; on the 21st, Templeton played Francis in *Rob Roy* ; and on December 3rd Charles Kean appeared. December 11th, *Sardanapalus* was acted here for the first time, Kean playing the title rôle, and Pritchard taking the part of Salamenes.

A pantomime entitled *Number Nip** was produced on December 27th ; the scenery chiefly by Beverley, "from the Theatre Royal, Liverpool." Taylor was Clown ; Beckett, Pantaloon ; De Hayes, Harlequin ; and Miss Fairbrother, Columbine. One of the pieces of scenery painted by Beverley was a grand moving diorama illustrative of scenes from Falconer's "Shipwreck." The pantomime ran twenty-two nights.

On January 7th the "return to the Edinburgh stage" was announced of Mrs Bushe, late Miss Noel. The following information regarding Mrs Bushe is taken from a letter addressed by her to Henry Phillips, and dated from 2 Heriot Row, Edinburgh, May 3rd 1844. After stating that she had been the original Agnes in *Der Freischütz*, at the English Opera House, and had been engaged by Murray to play the same part in Edinburgh, she continues that she was married in April 1829 to Dr George M. Bushe, son of Major Bushe, of the 21st Dragoons, and nephew of the late Lord Chief Justice of Ireland. Bushe was Professor of Anatomy and Physiology in Rutgers University, New York, where he resided till his death in 1837. Mrs Bushe then returned to England ; but through failures in America and property going down in value, she lost

* Probably from Mark Lemon's "Legends of Number Nip."

all her money, and had to return to Edinburgh in 1838 to teach music.

On January 21st Edward Stirling's adaptation of *Nicholas Nickleby* was produced. In this Murray made a great feature of the part of Newman Noggs, and Euston was hardly inferior as Mantilini. Miss Julia Cruise was the Smike; Miss Nicol, Madame Mantilini; Mrs Griffiths, Mrs Squeers; Skerrett, Squeers; Lloyd, John Brodie; and Crisp, Nicholas. It was played twenty-seven times, and kept the stage for years.

On January 25th Sinclair commenced a "farewell" visit; and on February 4th George Horncastle (bass), Mrs East, and Mr and Mrs Wood commenced an engagement. Mrs Wood's maiden name was Paton; she was first married to Lord W. Lennox, whom she divorced; and she was now the wife of Wood, the tenor.

The 25th of February saw the first appearance here of J. B. Buckstone, an actor who for nearly forty years continued a sterling favourite with the Edinburgh public; his first appearance here was as Mr Dove in *Married Life*.

April 23rd, being the anniversary of Shakspeare's "birthday," the performance was under the patronage of the Shakspeare Club of Scotland; and on May 1st Musgrave, leader of the Theatre orchestra, took his benefit, on which occasion Handel's *Acis and Galatea* was given in Edinburgh for the *first time entire*. An orchestra was erected on the stage, the Edinburgh Choral Society and many of the leading instrumentalists taking part.

The season closed on May 3rd, but the Royal opened for a short after season from the 14th to 25th. The season, until nearly its close, had been far from successful, as Murray intimated in his farewell address; one of the best, by the way, of the many brilliant addresses he delivered.

The Adelphi season (1839) lasted from June 1st to October 18th, during which time little of any importance was done. On the last night of the season (Murray's benefit) Lloyd appeared as the Newhaven Fishwife.

The winter season 1839-40 opened on November 9th. The company does not seem to have been so strong as usual. One addition, however, was of importance, namely, John Ryder, who came from Newcastle, and joined the Edinburgh company on January 29th (1840), playing Claudius in *Hamlet*. Ryder for many years enjoyed a wide reputation, and died so recently as March 27th 1885. On the same evening (January 29th, 1840) the part of Hamlet was played by another new comer, Cathcart,

who must not be confused with the Cathcart of Princess's, London, fame.*

On December 21st Lloyd made a hit in *The Statue Gallery*, in which he represented some burlesque classical statues in imitation of Ducrow, who had just concluded a short engagement. The pantomime, *The Bird of Paradise*, was produced on December 30th with a strong company; Miss Hall (from Drury Lane). Columbine; Tom Mathews (Covent Garden), Clown; Gough (The Surrey), Pantaloon; and Sidini, Harlequin. Mathews was of the old Grimaldi type of clown, and seems to have been genuinely funny. The pantomime ran twenty-six nights.

On January 25th Musgrave, the leader, had to retire on account of "ill health"—so said the bills—and James Dewar was recalled to the post. Perhaps no better man could have been got, for his acquaintance with Scottish music in particular was very extensive, and the discipline he maintained in the orchestra was thorough. His son, Fred Dewar, was a well-known actor.

February 17th, a version of Ainsworth's *Jack Sheppard*, "specially arranged for this Theatre," probably by Murray himself, who delivered a prologue. Jack = Crisp; Blueskin (with the songs) = Lloyd; Sir Rowland = Ryder; Hogarth, the painter = Murray; Sir James Thornhill = Mackay. It was very successful, and ran to the thirty-sixth night.

March 7th, Planché's pretty comedietta, *Faint Heart never won Fair Lady*, was brought out, with Euston as Ruy Gomery; Ryder, as the Marquis; and Miss Cruise, the Duchess. It only ran for eleven nights.

On March 23rd, *Oliver Twist*, specially adapted for this Theatre—in all probability by Murray. Mr Bumble = Murray; Leeford = Ryder; Sowerby = Peddie; Oliver Twist = Miss Saunders;† Bill Sykes = Crisp; Fagin = Skerrett; Charley Bates = Power (who, it may be noted, was an exceedingly large man); Brownlow = Redford; Nancy = Miss Cruise; Mrs Coney = Miss Nicol; and the Artful Dodger = Lloyd—a part that Toole may be said to have made peculiarly his own when he took it up in 1854.

The season finished on April 18th, and a short after season commenced ten days afterwards, and lasted till May 29th.

* Kean's Cathcart was born 1832.

† Afterwards known as Miss Charlotte Saunders, an actress who made a lasting impression on the memories of those who saw her act at the "Strand," with which theatre her name is chiefly associated. She is still living (1888).

The Adelphi opened for the summer season on June 27th 1840 with a very strong company. The opening pieces were *Charles XII.*, in which Miss Eliza Phillips, from Covent Garden, appeared as Ulrica, and the comic drama *Court Favour*.

July 1st, *Robert Macaire*, the part of Pierre, head waiter, by Sam. Cowell, from the Theatre St Charles, New Orleans—his first appearance in Europe. According to a sketch of his life published in 1853, his mother was one of Murray's sisters, "Sam" Cowell being the Edinburgh manager's nephew; his sister married Bateman, the American actor and manager. Cowell was an exceedingly clever comedian, and his musical abilities were considerable. He sang negro songs as he had heard negroes sing them out west. His "Jim along Josey," "Yaller Busha Belle," and "Clara Cline" were inimitable performances. On leaving Edinburgh, a few years after this, he at once stepped into good positions in London and the provinces, latterly devoting himself exclusively to comic singing. He married Miss Ebsworth of the Edinburgh company, and his daughters, Sydney and Florence, became in time great favourites in Edinburgh. He died March 11th 1864, aged only 43.

On July 3rd the capital farce of *His Last Legs* was played for the first time in Edinburgh, and the part that both Wyndham and his successor in management, J. B. Howard, so completely made their own—Felix O'Callaghan—was filled by Sloan from Drury Lane, his first appearance here. The other parts were:—Charles = Horton; Rivers = Granger; Mrs Montague = Miss Nicol; Mrs Banks = Mrs Turnbull; Julia = Miss E. Phillips.

On the 6th a historical drama entitled *The Massacre of Glencoe*, from the Haymarket, was brought out without much success; and on the 27th Wilson made his first appearance since his trip to America.

On September 11th Mark Leman Rede's operatic drama, *The Gaberlunzie Man*, from the English Opera House, was brought out, with Wilson in his original part of the Gaberlunzie man.


A leading tragedian of the name of Charles Dibdin Pitt made his first bow to an Edinburgh audience on September 23rd. He had come from the Theatre Royal, Glasgow, and appears to have been an actor of ability.

The season closed on October 16th with Murray's benefit.

CHAPTER XXI.

MURRAY'S REIGN.

SECOND DECADE.

HE company that Murray got together for the winter season 1840-1 included C. D. Pitt as lead, his wife (late Miss Coveney), and Melrose, the Scotch comedian. Leigh, who had joined at the Adelphi the preceding summer, became in after years very well known as perhaps the best juvenile man of his time. His proper stage name was Leigh Murray, and on leaving Edinburgh in 1845 he almost at once took a leading position in London as a *jeune premiere* and gentlemanly actor. He was the first Sir Charles Pomander (*Masks and Faces*), and Gustave de Grignon (*Ladies' Battle*). When at his best he seems to have lost the confidence of the managers (he seems not to have been relied upon to keep engagements), and was laid aside long before his death, which took place on January 17th 1870.

Prior to the commencement of the winter season the "Royal" opened for a few nights (October 27th to November 13th) with some exhibitions of lions and tigers. On the 14th November the dramatic season commenced.

December 7th was produced a burlesque, *Baron Munchausen*; Munchausen = Harvey; The Manager = Lloyd; The Tiger = Carlos. It ran fourteen nights.

December 12th, "the public is respectfully informed that the theatrical train will start about a quarter past nine, arriving at the terminus ten minutes before ten. First-class carriages, 2s. 6d.; second, 1s. 6d.; third, 1s.; fourth, 6d." The piece was called the *Railway Train*, an interlude, and on the playbills a curious reminiscence of the past is a

rough cut representing a train which, though supposed to be in motion, has a guard seated on top of each carriage—such having actually been the custom when railways were first introduced. *The Railway Train* ran eighteen nights.

On December 26th the pantomime, *Harlequin, King of the Cannibal Islands*, was produced. Cowell sang (as Grand Cook) a very popular parody on the “King of the Cannibal Islands.” Tom Mathews was again Clown; Carles, Pantaloon; Harvey, Harlequin; and Miss Reekie, Columbine. It ran twenty-six nights.

On January 26th a piece called *Griselda*, translated by Sir R. Anstruther (from the German), and never acted before, was produced. Sir Percival of Wales = Pitt; Blind Cedric = Pritchard; Sir Gavin = Leigh; Ronald = Redford; King Arthur = Power; Guenevra = Mrs Brookes; Gertrude = Miss Nicol; Oriana = Miss Phillips; Griselda = Mrs Yarnold. This piece ran thirteen nights.

The season finished on March 13th, but the doors were again opened on the 15th, to close finally on April 21st. During this after season a benefit performance was given for the Scott monument fund, when the officers of the garrison played the entire programme of three pieces—one of them, entitled *Love à la Militaire*, being by Major Hort.

On making his farewell speech on April 21st Murray had one very important fact to communicate. The announcement will be best given in his own words:—

“As I am particularly anxious, Ladies and Gentlemen, for reasons which I am sure you will appreciate, that the amusements of this evening should terminate at as early an hour as possible, I would not trespass longer on your patience, did I not feel that I should be neglectful to you and to myself did I suffer the retirement of Mr Mackay from this theatre to pass unnoticed and unregretted. After twenty-two years of honourable service, he this evening ceases to be a member of the regular company. It would be impertinent in me to expatiate on Mr Mackay’s professional merit. Your approbation and the approbation of Edinburgh is no light meed. Your approbation has placed him foremost in the foremost ranks of his profession, and he had the honour to embody the conceptions of a Scott, while that master-mind remained to acknowledge and applaud the actor’s talent. If I might be permitted a little doggrel, I would add to the lines which I said of Macklin’s Shylock—

‘He was the Jew
That Shakspeare drew;
So, in Mackay, we likewise find
The Bailie of Sir Walter’s mind.’

“The success of the far-famed opera of *Rob Roy* enabled Mrs Henry Siddons to establish the Edinburgh Theatrical Fund—a fund which now alleviates the age and infirmities

of several who once figured on these boards, and I hope we will never forget that to my esteemed friend Mackay's admirable personation of the Bailie, that success was mainly attributable. May every happiness and good fortune attend him wherever he goes. I shall not further intrude than to contradict the report that I am going to pass the summer at the North Pole. It is a mistake; I am not going there—I am going to the Adelphi, where, on Saturday, 22nd of May next, we hope to be honoured with the renewal of your favour and support. To the Most Worshipful Master and Officers of the Grand Lodge, and to the other brethren who have this evening honoured me with their patronage, I beg leave to return my best acknowledgments; and, offering the same to all our patrons, present or not present, I very respectfully make my bow."

The Adelphi opened on May 29th 1841, not the 22nd, as Murray had announced. Several important additions had been made to the company. Corri and his brother H. Corri were nephews of the unfortunate Natali Corri, who gave his name to "Corri's Rooms" (the same building as the Adelphi). Patrick (the elder brother) and Henry were both excellent basses, the latter being in addition a good dancer; while in the Edinburgh company he played harlequin on one or two occasions. Henry, however, is best remembered by his long connection with the Pyne and Harrison opera company, while latterly he had a travelling opera company of his own. Patrick was not so fortunate in his career, and before his death (June 1st 1876) had become chairman in a London music hall. Dussek Corri, Haydn Corri, W. Corri, and Miss Kathleen Corri, all belong to the same family.

Eburne, a light comedian, was from Glasgow. His connection with the Edinburgh Theatres—Royal, Victoria, and Queen's—extended over many years. In addition to being a fairly good actor, he had some musical knowledge, and a light tenor voice, which he used to advantage. Latterly he became a member of Webster's Adelphi company, London. He married Miss Macfarlane of the Edinburgh Theatre.

Edmund Glover, who was engaged as "lead" in place of C. D. Pitt, was a son of the famous Mrs Glover. He was a man of exceptional talents:—a sound capable actor, a capital dancer and pantomimist, an able fencer and swordsman, and a first-rate artist. In addition to these accomplishments, he proved himself a successful theatrical manager in Glasgow, where he went after leaving Edinburgh. He died October 23rd 1860, and left several children, one of whom—William—inherits his father's talent as a painter in a marked degree; another son, Sam, who showed ability as a Scotch comedian, died abroad; and a daughter married Powrie the tragedian. Miss E. Lee, another new member of the

company, shortly afterwards married Leigh, and became in time celebrated as Mrs Leigh Murray.*

The most interesting production of the season was *The Whistler of the Glen; or, the Fate of the Lily of St Leonard's*, "for the first time in this city, a new drama in two acts, founded on the hitherto undramatised part of Sir Walter Scott's 'Heart of Midlothian.'" This was probably C. D. Pitt's version, originally produced at the London Victoria in 1833, and was the last of the Waverley dramas that was produced during Murray's reign. The cast was as follows:—Sir George Staunton = John Ryder; Duncan Knock = Power; Reuben Butler = Boyce; Mr Meikle-hose = W. Johnson; Dicky Dulton = Lloyd; Donacha Dhu = Edmund Glover; First and Second Gipsies = Pat and Henry Corri; The Whistler of the Glen = Mrs Tellett; Lady Staunton = Miss E. Lee; Effie Butler, with songs, = Miss Walstein.

On September 4th, first time on any stage, *Nick of the Woods, or the Dark Spirit of the Dismal Swamp*, a new American legendary drama. On the 18th, *Barnaby Rudge, or the Fatal 19th of March*, the part of Barnaby Rudge being filled by Mrs Tellett. It ran nineteen nights, and the season terminated on October 26th, when a very clever "joint stock farewell address" was delivered by Murray and the members of the company.

The company brought together for the winter season 1841-2 at the Royal was remarkably strong. Although Mackay had retired from regular work, he was still available for all his old parts when wanted. For musical pieces the company was particularly efficient. There were King and Eburne, tenors; Bishop and the Corris, basses; besides Cowell, Murray, and to a lesser extent, Smythson, Sullivan, and Leigh; while Turnbull could be engaged when an alto was required. Miss Smith, Miss J. Smith, Mrs Leigh, Mrs Tellett, and Mrs Turnbull, were the lady vocalists.

A noteworthy addition to the company was Sullivan, or "Barry" Sullivan as he is styled now-a-days. In 1841 he played "second heavy" parts, and otherwise made himself generally useful. He is now, perhaps, the very last of the old school of tragedians. Edmund Glover continued as leading actor during the winter season, and Miss Emmeline Montague, from Drury Lane, took the female "lead." She afterwards married the famous low comedian, Compton.

* Still alive, and had a complimentary benefit given her, May 9th 1888, when nearly all the principal actors and actresses in London assisted.

The season opened on November 6th with *The Love Chase*. November 20th, Mrs Brougham, a sort of star, as Mrs Oakly in *Jealous Wife*. November 24th, *Robber's Wife*, the part of Red Rody, Sullivan—his first appearance in Edinburgh.

On December 10th, a piece called *Blue Jackets* was brought out, with Murray as Admiral Trunnion; Mrs Tellett, Fanny Trunnion; Lloyd, Ben Buntlin; Cowell, Jack, a nigger. It ran ten nights.

The pantomime, *Mother Redcap*, was brought out December 31st. Scenery by Muir and Mason. S. Cowell in the title rôle; Carles, Clown; H. Corri, Pantaloon; Harvey, Harlequin; and Miss Maysall, Columbine. This ran some twenty-two nights.

January 17th, *Comedy of Errors*, with the whole of "the original music" composed by Henry R. Bishop, "Professor of Music in the University of Edinburgh."

March 1st, a melo-drama called *The Demon Gift*, in which Glover, Murray, Ryder, Leigh, and Mrs Leigh acted.

March 7th. *The Gamester*. Beverley = Charles Kean; Lewsen = Conway (from Drury Lane, first appearance here); Stukeley = Edmund Glover; Bates = Sullivan.

The season closed on April 15th, with Murray's benefit. In his farewell address he spoke as follows:—

"To borrow a mercantile phrase, theatres, especially the large ones, are looking down, for which depression many causes may be given, and one in particular, the late hour of fashionable parties; for the man who sits down to dinner at seven o'clock must of necessity cut his mutton and the theatre at the same time, and, with a sharp appetite, I would back mutton against Shakspeare at any odds. Thus, the dinner table depopulates our first prices, and as one evil generates another, the drawing-room ruins our second—for who would leave the attractions of a modern soiree, with its bevy of beauties, its gas, its songs, quadrilles, *tableaux vivans*, and all the thousand and one attractions which throw a fairy charm over the private parties of present days—who would leave them, I say, on a snowy night to see a few shivering actors striving to be funny to the as few deluded individuals, whom the astounding mysteries of a long playbill have inveigled into our clutches? What is to be done to remedy this evil I know not, for even if Kemble himself were here for a whole season, I'd back *the dinners* against him in the long run. To ask you to give up your dinners would be ridiculous, and yet without some change we must give up ours."

Among some papers picked out of the debris after one of the present Theatre Royal conflagrations was the weekly pay list of the company for the week ending March 12th 1842; the following being the salaries paid:—William Murray, £4; Glover, £3, 3s.; King, £3, 3s.; Lloyd, £3; Euston, £3; Conway, £3; Williams, £2, 2s.; Cowell, £2; Ryder,

£2; Smythson, £1, 15s.; Power, £1, 15s.; Sullivan, £1, 10s.; Leigh, £1, 10s.; Eburne, £1, 5s.; Corri, £1, 1s.; H. Corri, £1, 1s.; Melrose, 15s.; Treasurer, £2, 10s.; Redford, £1, 10s.; Miss Montague, £5; Miss Smith, £3, 10s.; Miss Julia Smith, £3, 10s.; Mrs Tellett, £3, 10s.; Mrs Leigh, £2, 15s.; Mrs Brookes, £2, 12s. 6d.; Miss Nicol, £2, 5s.; Miss Conquest, £1, 5s.; Mrs Turnbull, £1, 5s.; Miss Ebsworth, £1, 5s. *Members of the Orchestra*.—James Dewar, £3, 13s. 6d.; Mackenzie, £2; Davis, £1, 15s.; Platt, Farmer, Mancar, Menzies, Hanson, Cameron, £1, 10s. each; Davis jun., £1, 5s.; Hoffman, £1, 1s.; Chapman, £1.

The Adelphi summer season for 1842—a memorable one as it proved—opened on April 30th with *Clari* and *My Grandfather's Will*. Sir Solomon Cynic = J. W. Ray, from Bath, a first-rate actor of “old men” parts, and who afterwards became well known under Phelps at Sadlers’ Wells; he was the original “Eccles” in the provinces.* On May 9th, for the first time in Edinburgh, *Richelieu*—the Richelieu of that evening was Edmund Glover, while Sullivan played Gaston, the same part that nearly fifteen years after Henry Irving played on his first appearance in Edinburgh, to the Richelieu, be it noted, of Barry Sullivan. The remainder of the cast was as follows:—Louis XIII. = Leigh; Baradas = F. Conway; Chevalier de Mauprat = W. H. Crisp; De Beringhen = S. Cowell; François = Mrs Tellett; Count de Clermont = Eburne; First Secretary = H. Corri; Captain of the Archers = Melrose; Pages = Misses Ebsworth and Macfarlane; Marion de Lorme = Miss Conquest; Julie = Miss Emmiline Montague.

May 20th, first appearance of Herr Drechsler, senior principal violoncello to His Highness the Grand Duke of Anhalt. Herr Drechsler’s connection with one of the first musical families of Edinburgh is well known.

Several pieces of minor importance were produced and some melodramas revived—the latter seemingly proving far more popular than plays such as *Richelieu*; but of far greater interest was the appearance, on August 9th, for the first time in Edinburgh, of John Reeves, from Drury Lane. Under that name was hidden the identity of our great English singer, Sims Reeves. He appeared on this occasion chiefly in a number of Scottish plays, which were got up during the Queen’s visit to Edin-

* He was also the original “Old Chodd” in *Society*, and Sir Alex. Shendryn in *Ours*, when these pieces came out at the Prince of Wales’ Theatre, London.

burgh.* Murray very likely expected a "command" for one of them ; but Victoria, unlike George IV., did not patronise the Theatre. Some of the casts of these pieces are worth giving in full, for the company—for a summer company especially—was very strong. August 9th, *Rob Roy*. Bailie Nicol Jarvie = Mackay (starring engagement) ; the Dougal = M'Ian (also starring ; he was a noted actor of Scottish and melo-dramatic parts, and became well-known as a painter) ; Rob Roy = Edmund Glover ; Sir F. Vernon = Sullivan ; Francis Osbaldistone = John Reeves ; Rashleigh = W. H. Crisp ; Captain Thornton = Leigh ; Owen = Lloyd ; Galbraith = Murray ; Gaoler = H. Corri ; Diana Vernon = Mrs Leigh (Leigh Murray) ; Jean M'Alpine = Miss Nicol ; Helen Macgregor = Mrs Brookes. On August 20th, *Guy Mannering*. Colonel Mannering = Gray ; Henry Bertram = John Reeves (who sang "Maiden, I will ne'er deceive thee," "The Flower of Ellerslie," "Let the toast be dear woman," &c.) ; Dandy Dinmont = Power ("Big" Power) ; Dominie Sampson = Mackay ; Mucklethrift = William Johnson ; Gilbert Glossin = Sam Cowell ; Gabriel = H. Corri (with song, "Safely follow him") ; Sebastian = Sullivan ; Dirk Hatterick = Murray ; Lucy = Miss Woolgar (from Theatre Royal, Birmingham, her first appearance, with songs) ; Julia Mannering = Mrs Leigh ; Flora = Miss Ebsworth ; Meg Merrilees = Mrs Brookes.

Reeves also played such parts as Lorenzo in the *Merchant of Venice* ; Frederick, in *No Song, No Supper* ; Blue Peter, in *Black-Eyed Susan* ; besides singing "Macgregor's Gathering" and other songs between the pieces. He does not seem, however, to have appeared in the *Beggars' Opera*, either during this or the two following seasons.

The following address, delivered by Murray on the closing night (October 21st), requires no apology for its insertion :—

"To go or not to go,—that was the question.
Whether 'twas better on our part to suffer
The toils and hazards of a winter season ;
Or to take leave of managerial cares,
And, by resigning, end them ? Resign ! to go
No more ; and by that *go*—one *go*—to end
The heartache, and the weekly, nightly, loss
The purse was heir to. 'Twas a consummation
Extremely to be wished. To cut and run,—
But run, perchance, to worse ;—aye, there's the rub ;
For in that run what accidents might chance,

* From August 29th to September 5th the Company removed to the Royal, then went back to the Adelphi.

When we had shuffled off the Patent here,
 Did make us pause. There's the respect,
 Makes management of so long life :
 For who would bear the fag both day and night,
 The long rehearsal and the empty bench,
 The *wipes* in the newspapers, the critics' scorn,
 The *Friend Anonymous*, and bitter taunt,
 Which manager must oft from actors take,
 When he himself might his quietus make
 By merely *running*? Who with painted smiles
 And forced grimace could such a life endure ;
 But that the dread of something worse behind,
 And the conviction, that to friends thus used
 No manager returns,—puzzles his pate,
 And makes him rather stick to what he's got
 Than fly to theatres he knows not of?

At all events, the war once more we'll wage,
 'And fret and strut our winter on the stage,'
 Nailing our tattered colours to the mast,
 Fight for a better season than the last.
 But, if to balls and concerts forced to yield,
 And midnight dinners drive us from the field,
 At least, 'We'll die with harness on our backs,'
 And, losing all, defy the Income Tax.
 Should acting fail, my varlets may resign
 The downtrod stage, and try some other line.
 Glover can paint, the call-boy turn postillion,
 Cowell and Lloyd try 'Singing for the million';
 But for your humble servant, I'm afraid,
 'Tis much too late to learn another trade ;
 Then, kindly, let me serve my time out here,
 Treat me as Tait* would, that famed auctioneer,
 And, though a damaged article I own,
 Still keep me 'going' till indeed I'm 'gone.'"

According to a carefully prepared table given in the first number of a dramatic paper, called *The Prompter*, which made its appearance during the autumn of 1842, it would seem that during the 150 nights of summer season, 132 different plays were performed in all 463 times, giving an average of three and a half repetitions to each play, and of about three plays to each night.

Ryder was now no longer in the company. After leaving Edinburgh he proceeded to London to fulfil an engagement at Drury Lane under

* Auctioneer in Hanover Street, now Chapman's.

Macready, who, at this time, had a splendid company. Ryder stayed with Macready some years, going with him to America. On his return, Ryder joined Kean at the Princess's, where he remained the whole time of Kean's management. The principal "heavy" parts being thus left open by Ryder's retirement, Sullivan stepped into them. A valuable addition to the company, who joined on May 2nd 1843, was William Howard, an excellent light comedian.*

On the opening night, November 12th, besides the *Clandestine Marriage*, Morton's new Drury Lane farce, *The Eton Boy*, was produced, and Murray showed his boundless versatility by taking the light comedy part of Captain Popem. The *Prompter* says he "did not look the part well, but acted it beautifully," and that Lloyd as Dabster "played famously." Mrs Leigh played Sally. The piece ran sixteen nights. On November 16th, as Grandfather Whitehead in Mark Lemon's affecting play of that name, Murray made one of his greatest hits. The little dramatic paper mentioned above, which contained some really thoughtful and intelligent criticism, says, that during some parts of the performance there was scarcely a dry eye in the house, and asserts that nothing that could be said would render justice to the splendid piece of acting which Murray gave. He was well supported by Glover, as Langley; Sullivan, as Drayton; Lloyd, as Bob Lincoln; and Miss E. Montague, as Louisa. It was played during the season twenty-four times. Notwithstanding its success, business remained very poor, so Murray tried the expedient of lowering his prices, making the boxes 3s., half-price 2s.; pit 2s., half-price 1s.; galleries, 1s. and 6d. This, however, did not answer, and the old prices were resumed upon the first night of the pantomime. The cause of the bad houses lay very probably in the melodramatic class of plays produced. These were all very well for the Adelphi, where, indeed, they were expected, but the class of audience that patronised the Royal expected something better.

On December 13th, *Alma Mater*, a now forgotten play by Boucicault, was announced, but owing to Murray's indisposition it was put off until the following evening (14th). It ran nine nights; and on the 27th a pantomime, entitled *Johnnie Fa; or, Harlequin and the King of the Gipsies*, was produced. The scenery was from the brushes of Thorne, Gordon, and Mason. The proceeds of the opening night were given

* Father of Howard, a well-known Edinburgh musician.

by Murray to "the committee for the relief of the unemployed operatives." Sullivan and Cowell both appeared in the opening, while Macdonald was Clown; Shaw, Harlequin; H. Corri, Pantaloon; and Mdle. Leoni, Columbine.

The pantomime contained an exceedingly ludicrous scene, in which Mainzer's "Singing for the Million" was ridiculed most effectively. H. Corri got great praise for his Pantaloon this year. The pantomime ran twenty-seven nights. On January 13th 1843, *The Attic Story*, a farce which ran sixteen nights. On February 22nd, for the first time on an Edinburgh stage, appeared an actor, who for nearly forty years became a familiar and welcome visitor. This was Charles Mathews, who some years before had settled down in life as an actor, and with his partner in business, as well as matrimonial bliss—Madame Vestris—had from his first start acquired a high standing in the profession.* His first appearance here was as Mr Charles Swiftly in *One Hour*, and also on the same night in *Patter versus Clatter*. Both pieces proved very popular, and were repeated several times. *Faint Heart Never Won Fair Lady* (February 23rd) was also well received. Speaking of the performance of this, the *Prompter* says, "By the by, a terrible blot in *Faint Heart* is Sullivan's acting. The night we saw it, he not only acted most abominably, but was sadly deficient in the text; indeed, once or twice we were afraid he would absolutely break down."

February 3rd, *London Assurance*, second time in Edinburgh. Dazzle = Mathews; Lady Gay Spanker = Mrs Charles Mathews; Meddle = Murray; Spanker = Lloyd.

The engagement of Mathews and Madame Vestris was a great success, full houses being the rule. The *Prompter* states that on one evening £132 was in the house and their benefit was expected to bring in more. It is interesting to note, on the same authority, that their terms with Murray were half the receipts after deducting the expenses, while Charles Kean, who appeared shortly after (alone, his wife being seriously ill at the time), also took half the receipts after deducting £25. A curious scene took place on the last night of Kean's appearance (April 8th). Upon the conclusion of the play (*Hamlet*), Kean, in response to loud cheering, came before the curtain—or rather, it should be said, from the *side door*—bowed and retired.

* His life forms a most fascinating romance up to the period of his going on the stage. It is a pity that his recent biographer did not chronicle his stage career as carefully as his earlier days.

This did not at all satisfy the audience, who continued to shout, hiss, and yell for nearly fifteen minutes. At last Murray came forward and apologised for Kean's non-reappearance, saying, at the same time, that Kean had left the Theatre. This was the first time that Kean had concluded an engagement in Edinburgh without making a speech, and the audience attributing this neglect—correctly, no doubt—to the tragedian's chagrin at the poor houses he had had, hissed loudly. Sir T. D. Lauder, who was in the boxes, after an ineffectual attempt at a speech, succeeded in proposing "three cheers for Mr Murray," which were loudly given. After a few conciliatory remarks, which he knew so well how to apply, Murray retired and the audience dispersed. Kean afterwards wrote to the *Caledonian Mercury* explaining his conduct, and stating that his reason for hurrying away was his natural anxiety to return to his wife, who was still lying ill. He also mentioned that the receipts during his engagement of nearly three weeks had amounted to £1026, of which his portion was £243, 9s.

On April 17th, Miss Ternan, a daughter of Ternan, an old Edinburgh favourite, and of Miss Jarman, once the pride of Murray's company, made her first appearance. She was only seven years old. Her father and mother also appeared, and were heartily welcomed back to the scene of their former successes.

May 15th, Glover's benefit, when he gave a representation of the "Venetian Statue," and, assisted by H. Corri, of "The Struggles of the Gladiators," the remainder of the programme consisting of *Richelieu*, *The Invincibles*, *Douglas*, and a couple of songs between the pieces! Surely plenty for the money!

The last night of the season was May 29th, when Murray attempted Shylock for his own benefit. Portia = Miss E. Montague; Launcelot Gobbo = Mackay; Bassanio = Glover; Antonio = Sullivan; Gratiano = Howard. Murray's Shylock seems to have been a correct and judicious impersonation, without however having any striking features.

The season now concluded was the last one for poor Power, who died shortly after in the Royal Infirmary from wounds inflicted by his own hand while under the influence of drink. He was a rather rough "gallery" sort of actor, and often imperfect in his parts; but he was nevertheless a useful hand, and in Scottish plays invaluable. His place, particularly for the latter line of characters, was filled up (1843-4) by Watt, from the Theatre Royal, Glasgow.

The summer season (1843) at the Adelphi opened on June 24th, on which evening Josephs, from the Theatre Royal, Glasgow, appeared as Mr Tilwell in *The Irish Tutor*. Josephs' connection with the Edinburgh stage was a long and intimate one. Miss Telbin, from Bristol, and H. Hamilton, from the Adelphi, London, also made their first appearance on that evening.

On July 12th Elton, the tragedian, concluded an engagement, and a few days afterwards he was drowned in the "Pegasus" steamer to Hull. He left seven children, and Murray most generously set apart the evening of July 29th as a benefit for the orphans; the result of this, along with several private subscriptions, was over £300, which sum was duly handed over to Charles Dickens, the chairman of the London committee for the management of the fund. Alexander having granted permission, the Edinburgh company went through to Glasgow, and gave a performance at the Theatre Royal there, for the benefit of the fund.

The season closed on August 25th, seventy-one plays having been performed in fifty-four nights.

For the winter season (1843-4), which opened on September 30th, Mrs W. H. Bland, from Covent Garden, joined as lead.

On the opening evening *Marie De Chamouni* was played, being its first performance in Edinburgh. Nothing else of importance occurred until November 14th, on which day *The Lady of Lyons* was played. Beauseant = Sullivan; General Damas = Murray; Claude = Edmund Glover (his first appearance in the part); Landlord of the Golden Lion = S. Cowell; Pauline = Miss Helen Faucit, her first appearance in Edinburgh. Miss Faucit's engagement lasted for twelve nights, but she was re-engaged in February 1844 for other twelve nights, and again in March.

The pantomime (December 27th) was *Baron Munchausen*, for which Edmund Bradwell, the machinist, was brought from London. Cowell was Munchausen; Boleno, Clown; Corri, Pantaloon; Sidini, Harlequin; and Mrs Laidlaw, Columbine. It ran twenty-nine nights.

February 6th, a transpontine melo-drama, *The Lost Ship*, in which T. P. Cooke played his original part of Ben Treenant. On February 26th *The Christmas Carol*, adapted from Dickens' story. Ebenezer Scrooge = Murray; Bob Cratchit = Lloyd; it ran eleven nights. May 16th being Dewar's benefit, Mrs Laidlaw and H. Corri danced the "Celebrated Polka," for the first time in Scotland.

On May 30th Sullivan took his farewell benefit, the programme of

which is quite worth giving in full. The performance commenced with *She Stoops to Conquer*, in which Sullivan did not appear; but at the conclusion of the comedy he delivered a farewell address. This was followed by *The Italian Brigand*, in which he played Alessandro Massaroni, after which Mrs Laidlaw and H. Corri danced the "celebrated polka," by desire. Lloyd sang the "Newhaven Fishwife," and Sam Cowell followed with the "melancholie historie of Lord Lovell and Lady Nancie Bell." The farce of *The Man and the Tiger* was next given, and the whole concluded with the tragedy of *Wallace*. Kirkpatrick by Sullivan.

The last night of the season was May 31st, when Murray took his benefit, and spoke his customary address.

Quite a number of new names appear in the list of the Adelphi company on the opening of the summer season. Chief among these newcomers may be mentioned Honey, who, unfortunately, while he stayed in Edinburgh, had no opportunity of distinguishing himself. He afterwards became celebrated as a low comedian of first-rate ability. Over and above his humorous talents, he possessed a genuine bass voice of great power and compass, which, coupled with musicianly knowledge, made his performances in English opera and burlesque much more acceptable.*

The season opened on June 22nd, and on the 20th of the following month was brought out Webster's prize comedy, *Quid Pro Quo*.

On August 14th, for the first time in Scotland, Mark Lemon's domestic drama, in two acts, entitled *Robert Burns*, music arranged by James Dewar. The impersonator of the bard was Glover; Tam O'Shanter = Melrose; Souter Johnnie = Watt; Highland Mary = Mrs Leigh; Spirit of Scotland = Mrs Brookes.

On the 19th, *Polkamanía*, from the Lyceum, London, first time, and from the same Theatre on August 28th, *Martin Chuzzlewit*. Mr Jonas = Glover; Pecksniff = Ray; Mr Montague Tigg = W. Howard; Mark Tapley = Melrose; Mrs Sairey Gamp = Lloyd; Betsy Prigg = Miss Nicol. The Sairey Gamp by Lloyd was an immense success. September 19th, for the first time on any stage, *The Water Kelpie, a Tale of the Clyde*. Mr Sandy M'Bogle = Mackay; Arthur Fresham = W. Howard; Jock Wylie = Watt; Mrs M'Claver = Miss Nicol; Alice = Mrs Tellet. This was the last piece of any consequence produced, and the season closed on October 21st.

* Died 20th May 1880.



R. SMIRKE, R.A. pinx

C MARTIN HARDIE, A.R.S.A. del.

MRS H. SIDDONS.

In the latter part of this year (November 2nd 1844) occurred the death of Mrs Henry Siddons. Many there were who sincerely mourned her loss, for wherever she was known she was both loved and respected. Her private life had been one of great simplicity and beauty, and so much was this fact recognised in Scotland, that it, even more than her graces and accomplishments (which were potent attractions), caused the best families to be proud of receiving her as their equal. No one, however, could have felt her loss so deeply as did her brother, William Murray. Not until the following April did he recover sufficiently to appear again on the stage; but it is questionable if even then he had thoroughly recovered from the blow. The Edinburgh stage owed much to Mrs Henry Siddons. To her, in conjunction with Murray, was due the higher tone of refinement that had been given to dramatic representations, and the brilliant *example* of respectability she gave to the profession in her own life, must have tended to elevate the character of the local dramatic community, and to purge it of the uncertain, showman sort of state it had got into at the time she came to Edinburgh. In addition to this, the delight she afforded the audiences of nearly a quarter of a century by her matchless acting was enormous. She was, if not *the* most charming, certainly one of the most charming actresses of her day, and in the higher walks of comedy she was admittedly surpassed by none on the London boards, even in that bright era. Her particular forte lay in parts that required delicacy of handling, gentleness, and refined humour or pathos. Such characters as Rosalind, Viola, Lady Townly, Lucy Ashton, Desdemona, Beatrice, Portia, Lady Teazle, Miss Hardcastle, and a host of others, became in her hands breathing tangible realities, which once seen could never be forgotten. Above all, her acting was full of exquisite point and finish. Although she was capable of imparting the deepest interest to scenes of real pathos, she did not aspire to the more impassioned and lofty creations of the tragic muse.

The winter season (1844-5) opened on November 9th with *Love's Sacrifice*, in which Miss Macready, a tragic actress from Bristol, appeared as Margaret. Upon the same evening an actor of the name of Lester,* from Dublin, made his first appearance here. He had been engaged to fill light comedy and Irish parts; but on W. Howard rejoining the company in the early spring, he seems to have been unceremoniously deprived

* According to the biographer of Davidge Lester, this was no other than Lester Wallack.

of his light comedy parts, and thereafter he got little but Irishmen. Coul-dock, a "heavy" man, who subsequently became popular in America as a tragedian, and Melbourne,* a well-known low comedian from the Adelphi, Glasgow, also made a first appearance before an Edinburgh audience on the opening night.

The programmes of that evening contained the following announcement :—

"In consequence of the universal satisfaction given during the last summer season by the regulations regarding time at the Adelphi, and in obedience to the wishes of the Right Hon. the Lord Provost and other civic authorities, the performances at the Theatre Royal will always terminate at or before twelve o'clock."

On the 16th November William Davidge, who evidently had been engaged to take Murray's parts, made his first appearance. The first new piece was *Popping the Question*, a farce, which ran nine nights. Davidge played Mr Primrose; Miss Nicol and Mrs Brookes, Miss Biffin and Miss Winterblossom respectively.

November 23rd, *The Village Doctor* (ten visits); and on December 26th the pantomime, *Christmas Jinks and New Year's Gambols*, was started; scenery by Laidlaw and Wilson (from London). Boleno was Clown; Fielding, Pantaloon; Sidini, Harlequin; and Mrs Laidlaw, Columbine. It was played twenty-five times.

On January 22nd Charles Kemble *read* the first part of *King Henry IV.*; and on February 1st Charles D. Pitt commenced a starring engagement as a tragedian, being his "first appearance here for four years."

On March 17th, *Don Cæsar De Bazan* was acted for the first time in Edinburgh, on which occasion James Wallack appeared in his original part (Don Cæsar); Maritana being played by Miss E. Montague; Charles the Second by W. Howard; and Lazarillo by Mrs Tellett. It ran ten nights; and on April 1st was performed *The Hunchback*, the part of Sir Thomas Clifford being taken by "Mr Wyndham from the Theatre Royal, Adelphi, Glasgow, his first appearance in this city." Such was the announcement of the first appearance in Edinburgh of an actor who was destined to become associated with the history of the Edinburgh Stage almost as intimately as Murray himself; and who, by his admirable management, superb acting, and gentlemanly qualities, has secured for himself a cherished place in the memories of all who know or have ever seen him.

* He only appeared on the first two evenings of the season.

When he joined the company in 1845, it was to take Leigh's parts—juvenile tragedy. He was not well fitted for these ; but his elocution and judicious and sensible acting soon made him a favourite. His forte lay in light comedy and Irish gentlemen, but at that time such parts were in the hands of Howard and Lester.

The great singer, Braham, supported by his two sons, Charles and Hamilton, gave a “grand vocal and instrumental concert” on April 21st ; two nights afterwards Miss Helen Faucit played Pauline for Murray's benefit, he playing General Damas.

Murray's farewell address contained the following tribute to Miss Faucit's acting :—

“ Yet, *ere* I go, two duties must be paid :
First, thanks to you, and then to her, whose aid
Has cast a halo round our closing scene,
Bright, as the brightest of the past has been ;
What younger heads around may hope to see,
Or older ones retain in memory,
I know not, but I doubt the future when
' I ere shall look upon her like again.'
Long may she grace the Thespian boards and page,
One of the brightest gems upon the British stage.”

The summer season opened at the Adelphi on June 28th 1845 with *Luke, the Labourer*. Charles Paragon by Wyndham, his first appearance there. Several new pieces were produced. *Green Bushes* by Buckstone (July 10th). George O'Kennedy = Wyndham ; Grinnidge = Lloyd ; Geraldine = Miss Cleaver ; Louise = Miss Macfarlane (seven times). *Time Works Wonders* by Jerrold (July 19th). Felix Goldthumb = Wyndham ; Goldthumb = Murray (twenty-eight times). *Mr and Mrs Caudle* (July 31st). Caudle = Murray ; Mrs Caudle = Lloyd—a part in which he made a great hit (nineteen times).

On August 29th the Adelphi was closed, but it was reopened on September 1st by D. P. Miller, with his company from the Glasgow Adelphi. Murray had let the Theatre to Miller, but it is questionable if it paid the latter, as he only kept it open two weeks. Murray, in the mean time, opened with a strong counter-attraction at the Royal. On August 27th commenced the engagement of “*Les Danseuses Viennoises*” (thirty-six in number). The Royal stage was larger and therefore better suited for such an exhibition, as also for the performances of the “divine” Taglioni,

who danced for three nights, commencing September 18th,* with "La Sylphide."

The dancing season being over, Murray's company again migrated down Leith Walk to finish the season with the "legitimate," to aid them in which James Anderson, tragedian, from Drury Lane and Covent Garden, appeared in a round of standard parts; and on October 22nd Murray's benefit brought the season to a close, his "farewell" speech being a clever skit upon the railway-share mania of the time.

Several new names appeared in the list of the company for the winter season (1845-6). Coleman† joined for utility parts. Melrose took Power's parts, which during the previous winter season had been given to Watts. Melrose appears to have been possessed of distinct talent, but through intemperate habits he was eventually reduced to great poverty and distress. Mrs Leigh Murray continued in Edinburgh, although her husband was in London. She had appeared during the summer season under her full name, and continued it throughout the remainder of her career. Miss Julia St George‡ became one of the finest burlesque actresses of her day.

A notable feature this season was the number of stars who visited the Edinburgh firmament. On November 8th the famous American actress, Miss Cushman, appeared as Bianca in *Fazio*. This was on the opening night of the season. She was an extraordinary actress, and played, among many other parts, that of Romeo with success. She gave a very peculiar rendering of Meg Merrilees, which, to judge by portraits (in character), and accounts by living witnesses of her performance, must have been more akin to the Witch of Endor than to Scott's Gipsy woman.

Helen Faucit (November 24th), Charles Mathews and his wife (December 4th), Benjamin Webster and Madame Celeste (Haymarket), (January 26th), Edwin Forrest, American tragedian (February 9th), Leonard, Irish comedian (February 18th), Macready (supported by Ryder), Henry Hall, comedian and burlesque actor, Braham, Mrs Fitzwilliam, Buckstone, Miss Heron, child actress of Irish parts, and H. Smith with his *dog* Hofer, all appeared.

It is worth noting that Alexander Mackenzie, who had been several years deputy leader of the orchestra, now succeeded his old friend and master, James Dewar, as chief. Mackenzie not only kept the orchestra up

* First announced for 15th.

† Author of several very inaccurate theatrical works, including a "Life of Phelps."

‡ Joined at the Adelphi.

to its old standard, but even brought it to exceed its former efficiency. He was himself an admirable executant on the violin, and a first-rate musician, which qualifications, united to great energy, sound common sense, and great attraction of person and manner, could not fail in making a mark on the musical department of the Theatre. For its size, the Edinburgh orchestra may be said to have been the first in the kingdom, and it made successful annual visits to London. Mackenzie's early death in 1857 (October 7th) was to be deeply regretted. In his son, Dr A. C. Mackenzie, however, he left a legacy to music that his country can never be too proud of. R. B. Stewart was now deputy leader.

On December 8th Mathews produced the comedy *Used Up*, and played his original part of Sir Charles Coldstream; it ran eleven nights; and on the 22nd, *Antigone*, from the Greek of Sophocles, with Mendelssohn's music, was brought out. Creon = E. Glover; Haemon = Wyndham; Teiresias = Ray; Cleon = Reynolds; Antigone = Miss H. Faucit; Ismene = Mrs L. Murray; and Eurydice = Miss Cleaver. It was only played seven nights, and on the last night of the year the pantomime *Blue Beard* was produced. The scenery was by William Wilson, and the properties by Paterson (who afterwards became lessee of the Princess's Theatre). Harlequin and Columbine by Mr and Mrs G. Hunt; Clown = H. Hogg; Pantaloon = Gouriet. The pantomime ran twenty-one nights.

January 23rd, *The Cricket on the Hearth*, dramatised by Charles Archer "expressly for the Theatre Royal, Edinburgh." John Peerybingle = E. Glover; Thomas Tackleton = Ray; Caleb Plummer (Toole's great part) = Murray; The Stranger = Bedford; Dot = Mrs Tellet; Bertha, the blind girl, = Mrs Leigh Murray; May Fielding = Miss Macfarlane; Miss Tilly Slowboy = Mrs Josephs; Mrs Fielding = Miss Nicol; The Cricket = Miss Julia St George. As might be expected, Murray was great in the part of Caleb; living spectators of both, however, declare Toole's rendering to be the finer and more pathetic. The *Cricket* chirped for twelve nights. During Webster and Madame Celeste's engagement *Green Bushes* was revived, with the latter in her original part of Miami. Forrest, the American tragedian, opened with *Othello*. The Duke = Melrose; Cassio = Wyndham; Iago = E. Glover; Roderigo = Lloyd; Antonio = Honey; Messenger = Coleman; Desdemona = Mrs Leigh Murray.

February 12th, first night of *The Gladiator*. Spartacus = Edwin Forrest; Phasarius = E. Glover; Florus = Wyndham; Julia = Mrs Leigh Murray.

Macready opened (March 2nd) with *Hamlet*, Ryder playing the Ghost. March 4th, *King Lear*. King Lear = Macready ; Edgar = E. Glover ; Edmund = Wyndham ; Earl of Kent = Ryder ; Oswald = Lloyd ; Old Man = Murray ; Cordelia = Mrs Leigh Murray. *Lear* was announced as "from the original text of Shakspeare."

Braham appeared for only one night (March 27th), playing Count Bellino in *Devil's Bridge*, and Tom Tug in *The Waterman*. The last night of the season was on May 21st. Murray's address on that occasion is worth giving nearly in full :—

"Ladies and Gentlemen,—The termination of another season demands the customary tribute of our thanks, and respectful acknowledgments for the support we have received during its continuance. Should the tone of the few words I shall intrude upon you this evening appear less buoyant, less joyous, perchance, than usual, do not on that account, pray, do not think them less grateful, or mistake them for the language of complaint ; for, although our theatrical efforts have proved unprofitable, I willingly impute that result more to the somewhat rash extent of my engagements than any want of support on your part. Having been censured for not bringing sufficient novelty before you, I determined to wash out that stain this season, regardless of the terms demanded of me, and I trust, ladies and gentlemen, you will allow that novelty, at least, has not been wanting.

". . . That the great change which has taken place in the hours and habits of society has proved very detrimental to theatricals cannot be questioned ; and it is singular and interesting to know that, upwards of seventeen years ago, Sir Walter Scott foresaw and warned me of the change, advising me not to take the Patent for its whole term of twenty-one years, but to limit myself to the first ten, and then, if successful, take the chance of a renewal. But I was averse to any chance which might separate me from Edinburgh, and, begging your pardon for a very homely simile, adventured upon the 'whole animal.' Five years yet remain to me, and, if I am permitted to see their termination, I still hope, with your aid, to end my professional labours here ; for, though I will not conceal that I have had very kind and liberal offers from London, it would be a bitter struggle for me to be compelled to bid you, ladies and gentlemen, finally farewell, and quit a city I have so long looked on as my home."

The Adelphi opened on May 30th 1846 with a large company, but business seems not to have been good. On June 5th a new interlude in one act called *Fox and Goose*, by B. Webster and Dion Boucicault, was brought out. On July 30th the Danseuse-Viennoises opened for a short engagement ; and on 10th August the announcement that "Mr Lees, professor of gymnastics, and his pupil, Master George Hanlon," would make their first appearance here is of interest to those of the present generation of playgoers who have laughed their sides sore over the absurd antics of the "Hanlon Lees." Master Geo. Hanlon was "assisted" by his brother, Master Alfred Hanlon, "an infant three years old."

Mrs Glover, the "inimitable comic actress," played four nights, commencing August 21st. The season closed on Saturday, August 29th, and on Monday (31st) a short extra season commenced at the Royal with Mdlle. Cerito and other "attractions."

Previous to the opening of the regular winter season, Calcraft rented the Royal for five nights, commencing September 19th, when the boards were occupied with Italian Opera.

The winter dramatic season commenced on October 3rd, although announced on the bills of that date as a "short after season." Wyndham, who had been absent during the summer season, did not reappear this winter. The Irish parts, in addition to the light comedy, were taken by W. Howard, who had returned. A notable addition to the company was W. H. Reeves, brother to the great "Sims," and himself an excellent vocalist. Wigan, who is included in the list of the company, does not seem to have afterwards made himself known to fame. His first performance here was a distinct failure (Violet, in *Seeing Lloyd*, October 3rd)* and he afterwards got only a few minor parts to play.

October 12th, the "Ethiopian Minstrels" for six nights. A splendid production of *Masaniello* came out on December 1st. W. H. Reeves as the Fisherman of Naples; Pietro = Honey; Carlo = Lloyd; Don Alphonso = Bedford (the music must have been cut for him); Donna Elvira = Miss Mason; Stella = Mrs Tellet; Marian = Miss Aldridge; Fenella = Miss E. Taylor.

Charles Kemble Mason,† son of old Mason, made his first appearance "since his return from America," on December 4th, playing Iago to the Othello of Edmund Glover. Cassio = Murray; Roderigo = W. Howard; Antonio = Honey; Desdemona = Miss Coveney.

On December 28th the pantomime *Harlequin and the Shooting Star* was produced under the direction of Edmund Bradwell, from London. Pantaloon = Peter Anderson; Harlequin = Williams; Clown = Charles Montgomery; Columbine = Miss E. Taylor. On the opening night the pantomime was preceded by *The Honeymoon* (five acts). Duke = Glover; Juliana = Miss Coveney; and ran some thirty-four times. January 11th, *Macbeth*. Macbeth = Glover; Macduff = W. Howard; Lady Macbeth = Miss Cleaver; the three witches by Murray, Lloyd, and Miss Nicol; followed by the pantomime. January 21st, *Richard III*.

* It was given on the following evening (October 5th) to Honey. † Died in America, 11th July 1875.

Richard = Glover ; Richmond = Howard ; Ratcliffe = Honey ; Lord Mayor = Lloyd ; Duchess of York = Miss Nicol ; Lady Anne = Miss Coveney ; Queen Elizabeth = Miss Cleaver—and the pantomime. The following evening—*Robert Macaire*. Robert Macaire = Glover ; Jacques Strop = Lloyd ; Marie = Miss Cleaver ; after which the comedietta *Is he jealous ?* at the conclusion of which the Misses Coveney sang a duet ; and the performance concluded with the pantomime ;—all the above being good representative programmes of the period.

Helen Faucit appeared in February, and on March 9th Miss Anna Bishop made her first appearance at the Royal, acting in an English version of *La Sonnambula*. Pat and Henry Corri were engaged specially to support her. Aldridge—the African tragedian—appeared, after a long absence, on May 29th, as Othello.

On May 10th, *An Object of Interest*, an Irish farce, in which Howard played Barney O'Dwyer, a part that Wyndham afterwards made quite his own. On the same evening was played for the first time out of London, *Jenny Lind at Last*, in which Lloyd made a hit as Baron Swig-it-off Beerey. On May 29th Madame Vestris (along with Charles Mathews) concluded an engagement, and took her farewell of Edinburgh, it being her last professional appearance here ; Lady Bell, in *Know Your Own Mind*, being the last part she played, after which she delivered a farewell address. The season concluded on the following Monday (May 31st), when Murray delivered his address, in which there was nothing of moment beyond reference to a prosperous season and the scare which at one time got up about the North British Railway Company buying Shakspeare Square to turn it into a station.

On the opening of the Adelphi (June 26th 1847), *Temper*, by Robert Bell, a five act comedy from the Haymarket, was produced. Sir Marmaduke Topple = Murray ; other characters by the members of the company, which, it may be noted, had no new names added at that time.

July 3rd saw the first appearance here of a troupe of lady “niggers,” called the “Feminine Buffaloes.”

Murray re-appeared as Paul Pry on August 26th, a performance which had evidently lost none of its relish for an Edinburgh audience, as it was repeated several times during the season.

Glover took his benefit on August 30th, when his mother, Mrs Glover, appeared in *Spring and Autumn* as Mrs General Dartmouth, and as Mrs Quickfidget in *My Wife's Mother*.

An important addition to the company took place on September 16th, when Younge joined for heavies, playing on that evening Lord Dalgarno in *George Heriot*. Richard Younge's performances in the "character" parts in Robertson's comedies will never be forgotten by those who saw them. He became lessee of the Tyne Theatre quite recently, and died almost on the conclusion of his professional jubilee (June 5th 1887).

The Adelphi closed on October 15th.

The great Jenny Lind appeared in Edinburgh during the summer at a concert given in the Music Hall by Edmund Glover. The prices were enormous—centre seats, 31s. 6d. ; side seats and front gallery, 21s. ; under the gallery, 15s. ; back gallery and orchestra, 10s. 6d. ; organ gallery, 7s. 6d.—yet, so extraordinary was the demand, that in three hours every ticket had been purchased, many by speculators, who reaped a rich harvest off them. The concert was to take place on the 13th September, but owing to a severe cold Jenny Lind could not appear. In a few days, however, she had sufficiently recovered, and those who had been successful in the scramble for tickets were fully rewarded. She afterwards appeared at an afternoon concert, at which the prices were slightly reduced. It is worth noting that Murray had intended to engage the great cantatrice, and to that end had despatched Glover to London to settle terms. Settle terms he did, but for himself, not Murray !

An after season, commencing October 16th, preceded the winter season, and Mrs Butler (late Fanny Kemble) appeared for eight nights, playing in *Macbeth*, *The Hunchback*, *School for Scandal*, *Romeo and Juliet*, &c.

On November 6th the winter season opened, when Mrs Butler again appeared, being re-engaged for seven nights. Wyndham, who had joined the company during the summer (September 28th), re-appeared on the opening night as Sir Thomas Clifford in *The Hunchback*.

Don Cæsar was revived on November 15th. Charles II. = Wyndham ; Don Jose = R. Younge ; Don Cæsar = E. Glover : Lazarillo = Mrs Tellett ; Maritana = Miss Coveney.

On November 26th, "a new and original extravaganza," written by the author of *How to Settle Accounts with your Laundress*, entitled *This House to be Sold (the Property of the late William Shakspeare)*, *Inquire Within*. The music was selected from Shaksperian and other melodies by Alexander Mackenzie, the scenery by Frederick Lloyds. This piece, which ran twenty-one nights, was, of course, suggested by the threatened

sale of Shakspeare's birthplace, in Henley Street, Stratford-on-Avon. The venerable structure had been in the market only a few months previously, and had nearly been disposed of to an enterprising American, who threatened to cart it over to the States. The British public, however, were actually aroused to a sense of the importance of the occasion in time to get up a subscription, with which the house was bought and afterwards handed over to the nation. This dramatic sketch opened with the scene of the house, and introduced the hero, Mr Chatterton Chopkins (W. Howard), who, having failed to acquire an envied notoriety by writing a novel, wearing a moustache, and other absurdities, hit upon the idea of becoming the purchaser of Shakspeare's house, with whose name he fondly anticipated his own would descend to posterity. The property having accordingly been transferred to his possession, he resolved to pass a night within its venerable walls. When there the immortal Bard (W. Glover) appeared, and, in obedience to his summons, the stage became peopled with the creations of his mighty genius. But time had greatly changed their peculiar features, and identification (notwithstanding the costumes) became a difficult task. The melancholy Hamlet (Wyndham) had now become the merriest of the group; Falstaff (Ray) was emaciated, by having been induced to substitute water for the genial juice of the grape; Macbeth (Melrose) and his Lady (Miss Nicol) conversed in broad Scotch; and Othello (Lloyd) had enlisted among the Ethiopian Serenaders, and sings negro melodies.

The next interesting production was Morton's farce *Box and Cox* (called a "romance of real life,") on December 9th. John Box = Lloyd; James Cox = Murray; Mrs Bounce = Miss Nicol. It ran some thirty nights, and some playgoers, who saw both the London (Buckstone, Harley, and Mrs Macnamara) and Edinburgh productions, maintain that the latter was little if at all inferior.

W. Harrison, a celebrated tenor, made his first appearance here on December 11th, playing Henry Bertram in *Guy Mannering*. Colonel Mannering = Wyndham; Dandie Dinmont = Melrose; Dirk Hatterick = Murray; Gilbert Glossin = Lloyd; Dominie Sampson = Ray; Gabriel = Honey; Meg Merrilees = Miss Cleaver; Julia Mannering = Miss Harriet Coveney; Lucy Bertram = Miss Coveney.

On December 15th, a selection from Wallace's *Maritana* was given for the object of allowing Harrison to appear in his original part of Don Cæsar.

December 27th, the performances commenced with *She Stoops to*

Conquer. Young Marlow = W. Howard ; Hardcastle = Ray ; Tony = Lloyd ; Diggory = Honey ; Miss Hardcastle = Miss Coveney. After which was produced the pantomime *The Children in the Wood*—music by Mackenzie, scenery by F. Lloyds, properties by Paterson. Honey played the wicked uncle, and the two villains were impersonated by Vaudrey and Melrose. Harlequin = Samuel Lake ; Pantaloon = Charles Lloyds ; Clown = Mori ; Columbine = Miss Caroline Barnett. On the second night the above was changed to, Clown = Charles Lloyds ; Pantaloon = Freeman.

Glover seems to have met with some mishap, for on January 10th, *The Rivals*, Falkland = Glover, being his “first appearance since his late severe accident ;” Sir Anthony = Murray ; Sir Lucius = Wyndham ; Bob Acres = Lloyd. January 12th, *Douglas*, Young Norval = Dickenson (for this night only), from Theatre Royal, York, “his only appearance here this season ;” but on the 14th *Othello*, Othello = Dickenson. The same piece on the 20th, Othello = E. Glover ; Iago = R. Younge ; Roderigo = W. Howard.

Miss Helen Faucit appeared on January 31st (prices raised to 4s., 2s. 6d., 1s. 6d., and 1s.). February 5th, *School for Scandal*. Sir Peter Teazle = Mackay ; Sir Benjamin = Wyndham ; Crabtree = Lloyd ; Joseph = E. Glover ; Charles Surface = W. Howard ; Sir Harry (with song), = Binge, who had been specially retained during Miss Faucit’s engagement ; Lady Teazle = Helen Faucit.

February 12th, *Merchant of Venice*. Bassanio = Wyndham ; Shylock = Glover ; Portia = Helen Faucit. Miss Faucit was indisposed for a few evenings, but on March 4th took her benefit, when she played Beatrice in *Much Ado*, and Mrs Anne Bracegirdle in *The Tragedy Queen*.

Miss Julia Bennett* made her first appearance in Scotland at the Royal on March 9th, and on the 20th Mackay announced his professional farewell, which was to last over several weeks. On the 20th *Rob Roy* was announced for the “last time this season,” Bailie Nicol Jarvie by Mackay, “being his last appearance in that character in this city.” On the 23rd, however, it was done again “by particular desire,” again for the “last time ;” ditto, ditto on April 17th ; but on April 20th it is his “last appearance but one” in the part, the “very last” being on the 22nd. A most extraordinary announcement was made by Murray on

* From the Haymarket.

the occasion of Mackay's farewell. It lay in announcing several standard Scotch plays as being "for the last time!" For instance, on April 19th, "will be performed for the last time," *Guy Mannering*; again on the 24th, the *Heart of Midlothian*, "for the LAST TIME IN EDINBURGH." And on Mackay's last night, besides *Rob Roy* for the "last time," there was played *Cramond Brig*; in which Wilson appeared for that night only. Mackay took leave of his friends and patrons; and Murray, in response to loud calls, came forward, and in the course of a few remarks bore witness to his friend Mackay's sterling worth, not only as an actor, but as a man. He described him as straightforward, without professional vanity, and always ready to help. Mackenzie, the leader, took his benefit on May 11th under splendid patronage, when, in addition to a very attractive programme, he was assisted by his friend Henry E. Dibdin, who played a solo on the harp. Dibdin again played at Murray's benefit on May 18th, which was the last night of the season, and according to custom the manager delivered his farewell address—an excellently written one, but not containing matter that calls for insertion here.

It may be noted here that the season just finished was the first during which Murray employed a stage manager. That office he had invariably filled himself; but infirmities were no doubt creeping on him, and he resigned so much of the worry and work to the able hands of his leading actor, Glover. It was the last season, too, of poor Melrose. "Sudden indispositions" had become too frequent, and, their cause being well known, he was not re-engaged.

The Adelphi opened on July 1st 1848 with *Born to Good Luck*, in which Cooper, from the Theatre Royal, Manchester, appeared for the first time in Edinburgh. Hudson, who was engaged for three weeks, played several times in the drama of *Rory O'More* and the farce of *His Last Legs*. On the 24th James Bennett, who succeeded Glover as "lead," made his first appearance, playing Virginius. Bennett, not only in Edinburgh, but all through the provinces, became a great favourite. He never, however, rose to be more than a stock actor, and in his latter days was by no means well off. He died March 9th 1885.

On September 4th Murray announced to the public, in answer to several applications, that the appearance of Jenny Lind, which was advertised to take place at the Royal, was not his speculation, but that he had let the Theatre ("reluctantly") to Mr Knowles for the purpose.

An interesting announcement occurs on October 24th, when, at A.

Webster's benefit, "by consent of his grandfather and teacher, Mr Eager, Master Bridgman will perform a fantasia on the pianoforte and concertina."

Murray took his benefit on the closing night of the season, October 23rd, on which occasion Mackay "has most kindly consented to reappear for this night only." He played the Bailie.

Miss Parker, from the Olympic, who had joined the company this season, became a great favourite. She seems to have been a very good actress in her own line (chambermaids, &c.), and filled Mrs Tellet's place successfully. Her singing was tasteful, but her voice thin.

The winter season 1848-9 opened on November 4th with *Clari*. (Boxes, 3s. ; pit, 2s. ; galleries, 1s, and 6d. Doors open at 7 ; commence at 7.30.)

Some important changes were made in the company this winter. Bennett came up from the Adelphi. Alfred Davis, light comedian, from Newcastle, was a son of E. D. Davis, manager of the Newcastle Theatre for many years. Alfred did not stay long with Murray, leaving for Gourlay's Victoria Theatre on the Mound ; thence to Glasgow, where he became a manager. T. King, heavy man, came from Gourlay's Victoria ; he seems to have been a sound and intelligent actor, with a deep, powerful voice. Lloyd opened with the rest of the company, but left on December 23rd, his last part being Peter in *Romeo and Juliet*. His reasons for leaving are given by himself in his recently published "Life of an Actor," as follows :—

"Almost immediately after my visit to London in June 1847, Mr Edmund Glover had occasion to go up to town to hear Jenny Lind. He did a very clever thing. He managed to engage her services to sing in Edinburgh, Glasgow, and Perth, and he cleared £3000 by the spec. Indirectly this circumstance had a considerable effect on my own future fortunes, as will presently appear. Emboldened, and enabled by this slice of good luck which had fallen to his share, Mr Glover resolved to enter upon theatrical management on his own account. Accordingly, in the autumn of the following year (1848) he acquired possession of a large hall in West Nile Street, Glasgow, which had been used for some time for the exhibition of a diorama, and had it converted into a small theatre, which he called 'The Prince's Theatre.' His next step was to enter into negotiations with the reader's humble servant ; and, as the remuneration he offered was larger than I had hitherto enjoyed, I accepted the offer, and immediately wrote to Mr Murray, stating the case, and asking him as a great favour to cancel the remainder of my engagement with him. Mr Murray replied as follows :—

" 'Theatre Royal, Edinburgh, Thursday, November 9, 1848.

" 'My dear Lloyd,—I shall regret your loss extremely, and much wish I had known your intentions earlier, for, as you may easily imagine, it will not be an easy matter to supply the situation in the middle of a season, when all winter engagements are arranged ; but be

assured that, however inconvenienced I may be, you carry with you my honest wishes for your health, happiness, and success in all ways.—I am, very truly yours,

“ ‘ W. H. MURRAY.

“ ‘ To H. F. Lloyd, Esq., The Cottage, Leith Walk.’

“ About ten days after receipt of this friendly-worded note—it having been arranged that the Prince’s Theatre, Glasgow, should be opened in January following—I wrote to Mr Murray asking him if I might be allowed to take a farewell benefit at the Theatre Royal. To this application I received for answer the following :—

“ ‘ 23 Windsor Street, Tuesday Morning, November 21st 1848.

“ ‘ My dear Lloyd,—Although benefits, especially those of such favourites as you justly are, are heavy blows against the week in which they take place, I would, had you dealt a little more frankly with me, have done anything I could to have served you, as my conduct for many, many years must have proved ; but in the present instance I must decline your request, as I am making every exertion to fill up the week you allude to. I own the peculiar wording of your application for the present winter engagement prepared me in some degree for what has taken place ; but I did not think you would have suffered me to have gone to London without one word on the subject.—Yours very truly,

“ ‘ W. H. MURRAY.’

“ To this I sent the following reply :—

“ ‘ 22nd November 1848.

“ ‘ My Dear Sir,—You accuse me in your note of want of frankness. You knew of my leaving a few days after I had settled to go to Glasgow, before I even told my own family. So little did I expect it, that I was corresponding with Mr Alexander at that time to be with him during your pantomime, if you could let me off. With regard to your refusing a farewell benefit to an old servant of thirty-six seasons, that is no business of mine. It was not the want of money ; for I am proud to say I can leave Edinburgh as honourably as I came to it. My only wish was to have said farewell on the boards that I have trod so long, but must now do so elsewhere, and you shall find in my address I shall express nothing but the sincerest regard for and pain at leaving you ; although after what has passed, the sooner I leave you the better, as my presence cannot be agreeable. I should like to finish the 15th December, if possible. With my best wishes for your health and happiness, I remain, yours most truly,

H. F. LLOYD.

“ P.S.—May I add that I wish to do all I can to prove how anxious I am to continue a friendship of eighteen years’ standing?

H. F. L.’

“ That Mr Murray, although the pink of politeness in all he said and did, deeply resented my leaving, his next communication, I think, will show :—

“ ‘ Theatre Royal, Edinburgh, 25th November 1848.

“ ‘ My Dear Lloyd,—I have delayed answering yours of the 22nd instant until now, by a wish to comply with your request of quitting the Edinburgh Theatre before the expiry of the notice you first gave, to which I must now request your adhering, as I have not been able yet to prepare for your loss. Why I felt that you ought, considering the terms we had been so long upon, to have told me of your views before my visit to London, was that I was informed of them by a very intimate acquaintance of yours, but would not act upon what I had heard, until I heard it from yourself. This information preceded my leaving Edinburgh for London. You are offended at my not appointing you a benefit before your leaving. I have not the power of doing so, being in treaty with a person, who, if the terms are concluded

on, fills up every night till Christmas. No man wishes you success more honestly than I do ; but I still feel that I ought to have received earlier intimation of your intentions to leave, especially as others did. Excuse scratches, and believe me very truly yours,

“ ‘ W. H. MURRAY.’ ”

“ In default of the Theatre Royal, I arranged for taking farewell of my kind Edinburgh patrons in the Music Hall, where, on 26th December 1848, I gave a concert, at which several of the first local professionals, together with others from London, both vocal and instrumental, discoursed a long and varied programme. The occasion was under the patronage, among others, of the Duke and Duchess of Roxburgh, the Earl and Countess of Dalhousie, Sir Norman Macdonald Lockhart, Bart., of Lee, and Lady Lockhart, and was a complete success. The following is from a lengthened notice of it which appeared in the *Edinburgh Courant* :—

“ ‘ Mr Lloyd gave a farewell concert on Thursday evening in the Music Hall, on the occasion of his leaving the Edinburgh stage, where he has held a prominent place for eighteen years, to assume, along with Mr Edmund Glover, the management of the Prince’s Theatre or Opera House in Glasgow. The audience was such as might be expected from Mr Lloyd’s great popularity, crowded and enthusiastic. . . . At the conclusion he came forward and delivered a brief farewell address. It was, he said, for the first time in his life his duty to perform a very melancholy part, and that was bidding them farewell. For eighteen years he had been before them, and if not a very talented actor, he had at least won their approbation, and been always steady at his post, having never once been absent from his professional duties. (Loud cheers.) During that long period he had never had an angry word with the manager (Mr Murray), and he was happy to say they parted on terms of friendship. He must confess that the motive that had induced him to leave Edinburgh was a selfish one, but with a good prospect of bettering his condition, he thought it his duty to try, whether he might be successful in doing so or not ; and he was now about to open, in conjunction with his friend Mr Edmund Glover, the Prince’s Theatre in Glasgow. He dared not say much, lest he should unman himself, but would thank them from the bottom of his heart for the patronage and encouragement he had all along received, and trusting to receive the same hearty welcome, if ever he should have occasion to appear again before them, he would bid them respectfully farewell. Mr Lloyd withdrew amongst the most hearty cheering.’ ”

“ On the following morning I started for Glasgow to superintend the completion of the Prince’s Theatre, of which I was to be acting manager.”

Lyons, who joined for utility parts, was for many years a prominent member of the companies at the Royal, Adelphi, and Operetta House. He evidently showed promise in his younger days, and was accordingly advanced by Murray and Wyndham. His performances in later days, when he played juvenile lead in tragedy, were often, however, very stiff. He became lessee and manager of the Dundee Theatre, and died in that town May 28th 1868. He was father of Edmund and Robert, both of them actors of ability.

Lloyd’s place was filled by Henry Webb from Birmingham. Webb, before this time, had made his mark at minor theatres in London ; his

humour was perhaps not so genial and broad as Lloyd's, but he could rise to far higher flights when necessary. His Rag Picker of Paris was esteemed at the time a masterpiece, he also played with applause such parts as Belphegor, Dirk Hatterick, and Dennis, in *The Sergeant's Wife*, while as Dubosc in *The Courier of Lyons* he displayed a savage ferocity, which, in the opinion of witnesses of his acting still living, far surpassed Irving's performance in the same part. Webb afterwards became manager of the Queen's Theatre, Dublin, and—as will be seen by-and-by—became celebrated for his performance of Dromio of Ephesus, his brother Charles playing he of Syracuse. Webb was married when he came to Edinburgh, but his wife dying soon after, he married Miss Parker, the popular soubrette of the company ; he died January 15th 1867.

November 6th, Van Amburgh appeared with a collection of trained animals. On the 13th (in addition to the wild beast show), Planché's amusing drama, *The Jacobite*, was produced here for the first time. Lloyd was John Duck ; King, Sir Richard Wroughton ; Miss Coveney, Lady Somerford ; Miss Nicol, Mrs Pottle ; and Miss Parker, Patty Pottle. It was only played three times during the season.

On November 20th the then really great tragedian, G. V. Brooke,* appeared as Othello. This unfortunate actor, who, but for his own unsteadiness, might have reached the top of the ladder in his profession, is perhaps best remembered by his tragic death on board the *London*, which went down in the Bay of Biscay 10th January 1866. Edmund Yates, in his "Recollections," gives one or two very interesting notes regarding Brooke in his prosperous days, which may not be out of place here :—

"My first regular recollection of the Olympic is going there to the pit, to see a man who had taken the town by storm, as Othello. Gustavus Vaughan Brooke was his name, and he remains in my memory as the best representative of the character I have ever seen. Manly, soldierly, with all Salvini's gallantry and pathos, without a suggestion of Salvini's repulsive violence, with a voice now capable of the softest modulation in love or pity, now trumpet-toned in command—such was G. V. Brooke when I first saw him. He soon dropped away, poor fellow !—became a heavy drinker of stout and porter mostly, and lost his gallant bearing, and his voice grew thick and muddy ; and though he played for years afterwards, he was virtually a lost man in his first season."

His first part here, as mentioned above, was that of Othello to the Iago of James Bennett ; Cassio = Wyndham ; Roderigo = Alfred Davis,

* Although not so announced in the bills, this must have been his first appearance since boyhood in Edinburgh.

his first appearance here ; Desdemona = Miss Coveney ; Emilia = Miss Cleaver.

December 4th, James Anderson (formerly of the Edinburgh company) and Mrs Warner commenced a twelve nights engagement, during which they appeared in a round of tragic parts.

December 18th, *Romeo and Juliet*. Romeo = James Bennett ; Mercutio = Wyndham ; Nurse = Miss Nicol ; Peter = Lloyd ; Juliet = Miss Laura Addison, from the Haymarket, her first appearance in this Theatre. Her engagement only lasted until the 23rd, and on the 27th the pantomime of *Aladdin* was produced. The music was by Mackenzie and the scenery by Frederick Lloyds. Aladdin was played by Miss Vivash ; Ching Fou by Miss Nicol ; and the Spirit of the Lamp, by Miss Harriet Coveney. Mr Samuel Lake was Harlequin ; Charles Lloyds, Clown ; Miss Raymond, Columbine ; and Parry, from Dublin, Pantaloon. *Aladdin* ran twenty-six nights.

In those days no more than one performance of the pantomime was given *per diem* even at New Year time, but those who attended the Theatre at night got good value for their money. For instance, on January 4th 1849, for the first time that season, Planché's historical drama, in two acts, *Charles XII*. At the end of the drama, the *Grand Pas de Quatre*, from the popular ballet of *Le Lac des Fées*, by A. Webster and Madlles. Les Soeurs Saint Louin, assisted by Miss Weems ; to which will be added the popular interlude *The Two Gregories*, by T. Dibdin. The whole to conclude with the pantomime, consisting of fifteen scenes, and a panorama of Her Majesty's late visit to Scotland.

On January 22nd Miss Helen Faucit appeared for the first of twelve nights, the prices being raised to 4s., 2s. 6d., 1s. 6d., and 1s. She opened with *The Hunchback*, which was followed by the pantomime.

Catharine and Petruchio, as altered by Garrick, but with Shakspeare's introduction, was produced on February 15th, and the scene of the piece was "laid in the Baron's Hall, fitted up for a temporary theatre as in the days of yore." In the introduction T. King played the Lord ; Murray, Sly, the Tinker ; Josephs, First Player ; Henry Webb, Second Player ; Lyons, Page. In the drama—Petruchio = Wyndham, his first appearance in that character ; Grumio = Henry Webb ; The Tailor = Parry ; Music Master = W. H. Eburne ; Bianca = Miss Vivash ; Curtis = Miss Nicol ; Catharine = Miss Coveney. It was played twelve times during the season.

On Monday, April 2nd, Maurice Power, son of the famous

Tyrone Power, and himself an excellent Irish comedian, made his first professional appearance in Great Britain, playing Sir Patrick O'Plenipo and Paddy Carey.

At Mackenzie's benefit on April 21st, Master Bridgman played a solo on the concertina, and Murray's benefit, and last night of the season, was on April 23rd, when was played *Catharine and Petruchio*, and "this being the anniversary of Shakspeare's natal day," *Shakspeare's House to be Sold*.

The Theatre was then let to Madame Warton, who opened on May 1st 1849 with "an original and classic Walhalla Entertainment." During August an Italian opera company occupied the boards, and on September 3rd an after-season commenced, when Miss Fitzwilliam appeared for the first time in Edinburgh, being supported by Donald King in a number of English operas. During this after-season an actor who was to have a long and important connection with the Edinburgh Stage made his first appearance here. This was Thomas Powrie, from the Prince's Theatre, Glasgow, but a native of Dundee, and who made his first appearance in Edinburgh on October 10th, 1849, as Hamlet, Wyndham playing Laertes, and Miss Frankland, Ophelia. The following day the *Courant* said that Powrie "displayed talents which entitle him to take a high place among living actors." This was no doubt true, although in his latter days Powrie did not improve. It is quite possible that he did not study much, or endeavour very hard to improve in his profession; nor would the possession of private means aid him much in the progress of his art.

An exceptionally fine ballet company, under the management of Harris—father of the present lessee of Drury Lane—opened here on October 1st. The principal dancers were Mdlle. Wuthier and Signor Casati, while Glover of Glasgow allowed Mdlle Adele, Mr Martin, and Miss Massal, who all belonged to his company, to come through and assist. It is well worthy of note, too, that on this occasion the ladies of the ballet were all brought specially from London. The opening ballet, on October 1st, was "Les Patineurs" from the opera *Le Prophete*.

Murray took his benefit on October 22nd, the play being *Henry IV.*, in which Wyndham played Henry, Prince of Wales; Powrie, Hotspur, his second appearance in that character; Miss Nicol, Dame Quickly; and Murray, Sir John Falstaff—this last a performance of undoubted merit. On that evening Murray completed his fortieth year of service to the public of Edinburgh, and in a well-written address, he briefly reviewed

the many notable scenes and people he had seen within the same walls. Another theme he dwelt on was the altered state of theatricals; even then radical changes in the economy of theatrical management were taking place; but in Edinburgh, so long as Murray reigned, little save the "shadow" of the "coming event" of reform was perceptible.

In the mean time the Adelphi season (1849)—the legitimate termination of which was the after-season recorded above—had run its length. It opened on May 19th, with a fine revival of *As You Like It*. The Banished Duke = Channing,* from Manchester and Portsmouth, first appearance; Jaques = T. King; Orlando = Wyndham; Touchstone = H. Webb; William = Murray; Rosalind = Miss Frankland; with new scenery by Samuel Bough of Prince's Theatre, Glasgow, assisted by Channing of Theatre Royal, Manchester. Shakspeare, however, was not legitimate "Adelphi" fare, and was shelved after three nights.

On May 28th was produced *The Rag Picker of Paris*, in which H. Webb gave his powerful rendering of Father Jean—as originally played by him in London. Miss Frankland was the Marie Didier.

On June 11th Barry Sullivan revisited Edinburgh, playing a round of leading parts, including Hotspur, Young Norval, Romeo, &c.

August 20th, benefit of Wyndham, while the last night of the Adelphi season was on September 1st.

The following interesting paragraph is taken from the *Caledonian Mercury* of November 5th 1849 :—

"Truly, time seems to pass lightly over the head of the manager, who goes through his work with all the spirit and activity of far younger men. On Monday, the 22nd of October, Mr Murray finished the labour of the last season in the arduous character of Sir John Falstaff, and delivered his 'farewell address.' The next night he slept in London, where he devoted his time to visiting the principal theatres and making arrangements with several of the leading performers. On the following Tuesday he left London, reaching Edinburgh that night by the express train. The next day the company re-assembled for the rehearsal of a new comedy, and on Saturday evening (November 3rd) the winter season commenced with the *Merchant of Venice* and the farce of *Dominique*. The house was extremely well attended from the beginning of the evening, and at the second price crowded in all parts. No time seems to have been thrown away during the recess,—much new scenery was exhibited during the play, speaking highly for the abilities of the new artist, Mr Hawthorn."

Powrie appeared as Shylock, and seems to have achieved a distinct success, which was fully sustained by his performances on the succeeding

* Channing, besides acting utility, helped in the paint room, where he afterwards acquired great fame. Died April 1877.

evenings of Hamlet (November 5th), Sir Giles Overreach (November 8th), Macbeth, his first appearance in the character (November 12th), Romeo, also his first appearance in the part (November 19th), &c.

Few changes had been made in the company this season. Cooper re-appeared in the "old man" line, for which he was particularly well adapted, F. A. Robinson, who played walking gentleman here during this season, became afterwards well known at Sadler's Wells, and is at present * in a good position in America. T. King did the heavy rôles. Webster joined chiefly for Scottish parts, in which he excelled; he came from the Aberdeen and Glasgow Theatres, and had previously appeared in Edinburgh at Gourlay's Theatre. Vaudrey came a great deal to the front this year, playing walking gentlemen, foreigners, comedy parts, and even condescending to comic singing.

The leading lady, Miss Frankland, from Birmingham, some time afterwards married Mr Kinnear, a member of the Scottish Bar; Miss A. Vining, walking lady, from Weymouth, was also a new arrival.

At the commencement of the season Murray made an announcement that the performances would stop at eleven o'clock, or as near that hour as possible; the hour of commencing and of half-price remained as before; but the programmes were greatly shortened. According to the newspapers, this reformation proved to be acceptable to the bulk of the public, and especially to the ladies.

On November 24th, a performance of the *Merchant of Venice* was announced, with the part of Shylock "by that celebrated literary character and amateur of the drama, Mr G. H. Lewes." Lewes had been lecturing at the Philosophical Institution, so Murray secured him for a performance, and his appearance seems to have created considerable stir. On Monday, November 26th, Mr and Mrs Donald King, Signor Borroni and Patrick Corri appeared in an English version of *La Sonnambula*. The next evening, *Guy Mannering*, with the following excellent cast:—Colonel Mannering = Wyndham; Dandie Dinmont = W. Webster; Henry Bertram = Donald King; Dominie Sampson = W. Cooper; Gabriel = Patrick Corri; Meg Merrilees = Miss Cleaver; Lucy = Miss Lee. A two act farce or comedietta generally followed such pieces as *Guy Mannering*, the performances still being announced as terminating at eleven. The *Bohemian Girl* and *Maritana* were both given during

* 1887.

this engagement, which terminated on December 8th. On the 11th *Rob Roy* was played, the title rôle by Powrie, being his first appearance in that part ; Bailie Nicol Jarvie = W. Webster, the latter an impersonation considered by many at that time to be almost as good as Mackay's.

Powrie finished his engagement on Monday, December 17th, when he played for his own benefit the parts of Hamlet and Roderick Dhu (*Lady of the Lake*). Truly actors worked hard in those days !

December 19th saw the production of the pantomime, entitled *Little Boy Blue ; or, Harlequin and the Goblin Gnome of the Californian Gold Mines*. This was written by Nelson Lee, scenery by Hawthorn and Channing, and music by Alexander Mackenzie. Little Boy Blue = Miss Parker ; Primrose = Miss A. Vining ; Harlequin = Maskill ; Columbine = Miss Maskill, both from Sadler's Wells, their first appearance here ; Pantaloon = Halford, from Theatre Royal, Newcastle, his first appearance here ; and Clown = Herr Nicols Deulin.*

The eleven o'clock early closing still kept in vogue, although a five act comedy generally preceded the pantomime. Sometimes a melo-drama and farce took the place of the comedy ; for instance, on January 21st, the performance commenced with the pantomime, after which the celebrated melo-drama of the *Rag Picker of Paris*, and the whole concluding with *Monsieur Tonson*.

After having completed a highly successful engagement in Dundee, Powrie returned to Edinburgh on January 28th, playing on that evening as Julian St Pierre in Knowles' five act play *The Wife*.

The pantomime was played for the last time on the 30th, being its thirty-fifth performance.

Sir William Don, Bart., appeared as Box in *Box and Cox*, and Mr Pygmalion Phibbs in *Done on Both Sides* on March 1st at a garrison amateur performance. He was still only an amateur, but soon afterwards took to the stage, and although scarcely possessed of talent, contrived to make a good deal of money in the profession, with which he was able to pay off his debts. He was a man of almost gigantic stature, but well made and handsome, and although only a fairly effective comedian, seems to have achieved genuine success as Timothy Toodles. He died in Tasmania, March 19th 1862. His Widow, Lady Don, had been a Miss Emily Sanders. She continued for a good many years to undertake

* Herr Deulin, a very clever pantomimist, was playing in Drury Lane 1886-7.

starring engagements, but towards the close of her career lost position very rapidly. She died in Edinburgh, September 1875.

Miss Helen Faucit opened a six nights' engagement with Julia in *The Hunchback* on March 2nd.

The Lady of the Lake, Tom Dibdin's version, was played several times during the month, on the 18th of which Macready commenced a farewell engagement prior to his final retirement from the stage. On the 21st he played Othello to Powrie's Iago, Miss Frankland's Desdemona, and Wyndham's Cassio. On the 27th, Glover played Othello, while Macready appeared as Iago, and the latter's last appearance was on Saturday, March 30th, when he played King Henry in the fourth act of the second part of *King Henry IV.*, and Lord Townly in the *Provoked Husband* (first, third, and fifth acts)—a selection that might surely have been improved upon. The prices during Macready's engagement were 4s., 2s. 6d., 1s. 6d., and 1s.

Mr and Mrs Charles Kean commenced an engagement of nine nights on April 15th, on which evening they produced Marston's five act tragedy, *Strathmore*. Halbert Strathmore = Charles Kean; Sir Rupert Lorn = W. Cooper; Henry Lorn = Vaudrey; Brycefield — Wyndham; Roland = Henry Webb; Allan = Danvers; Katherine Lorn = Mrs Charles Kean. Two plays produced during this engagement were announced "as performed at the Royal Private Theatricals at Windsor Castle, before the Queen, Prince Albert, and the Court." These were *King Rene's Daughter* and *The Housekeeper*, the latter being on Kean's benefit and last night of the engagement (April 24th). Murray announced upon the playbills that as Kean had undertaken the management of "one of the principal London theatres," this would be the last time that gentleman would be able to appear in Edinburgh under his management. The theatre referred to was, of course, the Princess', in which Kean was about to inaugurate that brilliant series of revivals which render his name still famous.

For a few evenings the Theatre remained closed, and then reopened on April 30th with Powrie as Octavian in Coleman's *Mountaineers*, his first appearance in the part.

Wyndham took his benefit on May 9th under the patronage of the Grand Lodge of Scotland. *The Love Chase* was given, with Wyndham as Master Wildrake and Mrs Wyndham (formerly Miss Saker), "her first appearance these three years," as Constance. The comedy was followed by the singing of the National Anthem, after which "Mr Wyndham will

have the honour of delivering an appropriate address, written by a gentleman of Edinburgh for the occasion ;” then F. Bridgman performed a solo on the concertina, which was followed by the farce of *P.P. ; or, the Man and the Tiger*. Squire Splasher = Wyndham ; Bob Buckskin = Murray ; after which Vaudrey sang the “ Humours of a Country Fair,” and the performance concluded with the melo-drama *Peter Bell*.

Mackenzie took his benefit on the 11th May, when an augmented orchestra played, among other things, Mendelssohn’s Wedding March.

Miss Franklin played Pauline in *Lady of Lyons* for her benefit on May 18th, Powrie supporting her as Claude.

The last night of the season was May 24th, when Murray delivered the following address :—

“ If not of honest Paul already weary,
I’ve just dropped in to pop another query,
In confidence, respectfully inquiring
If you believe that Murray means retiring,
In honest truth, or that he only tries,
Like other shop-keepers, to raise supplies,
By feigning this ‘ enormous sacrifice.’
I see no reason for his resignation,
You’ve shown no symptom of disapprobation,
Or voted him unworthy of his station ;
And though he’s old, and has been many years
Nightly before you, yet he ne’er appears
Unwelcomed by your smiles and kindly cheers.
Can he, Othello-like, then bid farewell
To all his spangled troop, and prompter’s bell ;
The spirit-stirring overture, whose din,
Led by Mackenzie’s potent violin,
Yields to the drums and trumpets, which begin
Some tragic tale of horror—some dark scene—
Where Powrie storms, and emulating Kean
Seizes Miss Frankland, at whose dread cries
Brave Wyndham enters, and bold Powrie dies,
’Midst all the pomp and circumstances of wars,
Where preconcerted combats jest at scars ?
The farce succeeds, where Cooper, Emma Nicol,
Webb, and Miss Parker, all put in the sickle,
Reaping the genial harvest of applause,
Which from your willing hands their talent draws.
Can Murray think o’er this, and yet lay down
His tinsel sceptre and Dutch metal crown ?

Like Prospero, destroy the magic staff
 Wherein so often he has raised the laugh
 In 'William of the Forest,' 'Lubin Logs,'
 'The Tiger,' 'Mr Tomkins,' 'Newman Noggs,'
 'Simpson,' 'Rattan,' 'Bambino,' can he too
 To old 'Grandfather Whitehead' bid adieu?
 Will he no more your kindling plaudits seek
 In 'Falstaff,' 'Tony Lumpkin,' 'Dominique,'
 'Lissardo,' 'Sir Mark Chase,' where one and all,
 With shouts confessed, 'Twas merry in the hall!
 Shouts only equalled by the cheers which ran
 To greet his 'Brave Old Country Gentleman'?
 In private life, what can a fellow do,
 Whose whole career has been so wrapped in you,
 That your approval, and your votive wreaths,
 Have formed the very atmosphere he breathes?
 I stated all this to him, he but sighed,
 And with lack-lustred visage, thus replied:—
 'A moment comes to every mortal, when
 He must give place to younger, better men,
 And the great secret in the race we run
 Is to discover when we should have done,
 Not vainly clinging to our mimic trade
 Till friends may mourn o'er faculties decayed,
 And sadly viewing, as we tempt the scene,
 Merely the shadow of what once had been.
 Like honest Dogberry, I've had my crosses,
 And both in friends and pockets, heavy losses;
 Many warm hearts who used my toils to cheer,
 And to advise them, are no longer here;
 Many distinguished names, which brightly shone
 With generous kindness on my boyhood, gone.
 'Tis time to follow, and prepare for what
 You know, dear Paul, is every creature's lot.'
 He paused—but silence oft expresses more
 Than ever oratory hit before;
 And I retired, for I thought it rude
 Upon such serious feelings to intrude.
 I hear it said, the manager intends
 To-night, in person, to address his friends,
 And as you're all impatient for Mackay,
 I'll take my leave, trusting you'll pardon Pry.
 For Murray's sake, you'll like him, so do I,
 And I will say, Ay, and maintain it too,
 You can't regard him more than he does you."

The Adelphi season opened on June 15th 1850 with *Grandfather Whitehead*. A great many burlesques came out during the summer, the first in order being a travestie of *Macbeth*, commencing July 8th, and running fourteen nights. *Valentine and Orson*, *Ivanhoe*, and *Fair One with the Golden Locks*, all followed, and the Adelphi closed on the 28th of September.

The season, however, was carried on at the Royal, where, on September 30th, Buckstone and Mrs Fitzwilliam appeared for twelve nights, closing on October 12th, when Murray gave his customary address, from which the following is an excerpt :—

“Some two or three and thirty years since, when I first tried my ‘prentice han’ on these addresses, which you have ever so good-naturedly welcomed, I delivered one in the character of Sergeant Kite, soliciting your aid in a time of great depression. The conclusion ran thus :—

‘Cheered by these hopes, your sergeant keeps the field,
Though sorely pressed, he yet disdains to yield ;
As Jacques says, to play you many parts,
Attention, ever is his wish to please,
Till time shall say, “ Old Murray, *stand at ease*.’ ”

Time has kept his word, as he generally does in these matters, and I trust I have been found equally faithful in the promised attention to the duties of my situation. I must solicit your patience a few minutes more, while I repeat my acknowledgments for the success of this season, which—owing to your support, the attractions of Mr Aldridge, Mrs Fitzwilliam, and Mr Buckstone, aided by the talent and kind exertions of my regular company, which I feel great pleasure in thus publicly acknowledging ; and last, not least, my clever friends the monkeys—has been the most profitable I have known for many summers. You will smile, ladies and gentlemen, when I tell you that my engagement of the monkeys was swayed by a remembrance of my earliest master, John Kemble. Seeing me depressed one evening by the difficulties which then surrounded the Theatre, he kindly said, ‘Pshaw ! Will, don’t despond ; something will start up, either a great actor, or a learned dog, or a facetious monkey, and it’s of little consequence which, so long as the public is pleased.’ His words recurred to me when the monkeys were proposed and engaged, and as I saw the crowds they attracted, I could not help thinking

‘ ’Twas the sunset of life gave him mystical lore,
And coming events cast their *monkeys* before.’

On Monday, ladies and gentlemen, I purpose leaving for London, in hopes of making such arrangements for my last season as may merit the continuation of your favour, and when the final moment comes, and my professional place shall know me no more, I shall be amply repaid for all my labours, if you now and then bestow a thought upon your old and faithful servant, and with the madcap Prince of Wales, kindly think

‘ You could have better spared a better man.’ ”

The following and last season of the Royal under Murray's management opened on November 9th with *The Honeymoon* and Dibdin's *Waterman*. Murray gave an address commencing as follows :—

“ Prythee, Mackenzie, your Cremona stop,
While I solicit custom for the shop—
I'll be as brief as possible—and then
Resume your polkas and quadrilles again.
I own inward fears my old heart flutters
While taking, for the last time, down my shutters
And opening our mimic store. I court
For my concluding winter your support ;
You'll deem them, per'aps, unnecessary fears
After a servitude of forty years.
But there's a saddened feeling few can stifle
At finally performing e'en a trifle ;
Then wonder not your manager looks blue
As he approaches a divorce from you—
And let me add, friends, from your pockets too.
They say, the Income-tax next session ceases,
I'm sure mine will, when I give up my leases ;
Losing the power to draw bills each night,
Which your good nature honours before sight.”

The company which Murray had got together was very much the same as that of the preceding season. On November 11th *Macbeth*. *Macbeth* = Powrie ; Rosse = Herman Vezin, from the Theatre Royal Southampton, his first appearance here. November 13th, *Rob Roy*, the part of M'Stuart by Ed. Saker, and Rashleigh by Wyndham.

The pantomime this season was *Harlequin Christmas ; or, the Fairy of the Mistletoe Bough*. Sam Cowell commenced an engagement of a few nights on January 29th ; and on March 3rd G. V. Brooke appeared as Othello, with Powrie as Iago, Wyndham as Cassius, and Miss Frankland as Desdemona.

Miss Glyn made her first appearance in her native city on March 17th, playing Queen Catherine to the Cardinal Wolsey of E. Glover. After playing a few nights Miss Glyn was followed by Miss Helen Faucit ; and on April 14th an announcement appeared in the bills that owing to very unexpected circumstances the reappearance of Mackay on the stage had been rendered imperative. Accordingly for that night he played his old creation of the Bailie to Powrie's Rob Roy and Miss Rebecca Isaacs' Diana. The house was crowded upon his reappearance,

and when he appeared on the stage he was greeted with enthusiastic cheers. At the conclusion of the piece he addressed the audience as follows :—

“LADIES AND GENTLEMEN,—I find I cannot adequately express my feelings on this occasion. When I left the stage, I little dreamt I should ever appear on it again. Circumstances, however, have willed it otherwise, but your kind reception to-night convinces me that you sympathise with me.* (Loud cheers.) Your applause has been sincere, hearty, and kind—very kind indeed. I have often received your applause and enjoyed your smiles, for which I have always been grateful, and never more so, I assure you, than on the present occasion. If time be granted me, I will bring forward some of my old Scottish characters during the season; and I trust that my declining efforts will be received with the same kindness with which you have always received my youngest.”

Mackay took his benefit on May 6th with *The Heart of Midlothian* and *Redgauntlet*.

The last night of the season was on May 28th 1851, when Murray took his last benefit in the Royal.

The programme was as follows :—After the comedy of *The Honey-moon*, “Mr C. Mungall will give his celebrated delineation of the Grecian statues, after which Mr Murray will have the honour of taking leave of his friends and patrons as manager of the Theatre Royal. Mr H. Webb will then sing the comic song, “The Grand Exhibition,” and Mr F. Bridgman will perform a solo on a popular American melody on the concertina, being his last appearance in Edinburgh previous to his departure for Germany; the whole to conclude with *Cramond Brig*. Jock Howieson = Mackay.”

Murray’s speech was as follows :—

“LADIES AND GENTLEMEN,—Shakespeare has been truly said to have written for all time, and I believe there are few occasions on which a man cannot profitably avail himself of the language of that immortal bard. Thus, on the present occasion, I shall, slightly varying the text, commence my address in the words of Old Adam in *As You Like It*, saying,—

‘From nineteen years of age till now, threescore,
Here lived I, but now live here no more.
At nineteen years many their fortunes seek;
But at threescore, it is too late a week:
Yet fortune cannot recompense me better,
Than to leave honestly, and no man’s debtor.’

That recompence your kindness has secured to me. I make no claims to merit as an actor

* Mackay had lost all or nearly all his money.

or a manager, but I own I am proud of the unvarying and inflexible integrity with which your support has enabled this establishment to meet its engagements under the most adverse and trying circumstances; an integrity equalled by few theatres—surpassed by none. A somewhat early advertisement, over which I had no control, made my proposed retirement from management so long a matter of public notoriety, that, I fear, like other ‘coming events, it cast its shadows before,’ and has so frequently saddened and tinged the tone of my late addresses, that you must have likened me to Prior’s Thief, who, on his road to the gallows,

‘Adjusted his halter, and traversed the cart,
Full often took leave, yet was loath to depart.’

I own the resemblance—I am extremely loath to say farewell, deeply reluctant to part with those who have been for two-and-forty years my

‘Very *constant* and approved good masters.’

The very walls of this old building add to my regret, and by their ‘whispers of the past,’ recall bygone years, when the grey-headed gentleman before you was first given, a mere stripling, to your notice by a much-loved and respected sister. With such remembrances,

‘As o’er the dusky furniture I bend,
Each chair awakes the feelings of a friend.’

There is not a worn-out buckler behind these old scenes which does not recall, as if by instinct, and ‘instinct is a great matter,’ some thoughts of honest Jack Falstaff—‘Jack to you, but Sir John to the rest of the world’—not a red wig that does not laugh in my face at the simplicities of ‘William of the Forest,’ or the mad tricks of that imp of mischief, ‘Tony Lumpkin’—not a grey hair that does not embody some thoughts of ‘poor old Grandfather Whitehead.’ The very boards beneath me ‘prate of my whereabouts,’ and speak to me of the years when I trod them in the presence of a Siddons, an O’Neill, the Kembles, the Keans, Fawcett, Young, Macready, Bannister, Dowton, Johnstone, Emery, Liston, Mathews, Terry, Braham, and though last not least, those kindred spirits of song, Miss Stephens and your own Wilson, who poured forth the heart-stirring ballads of the ‘Land of the mountain and the flood,’ with all the fire of genius and the very soul of melody. With these vivid recollections, and, I trust, not faded powers, it has been asked of me why I retire? I reply, as I did at the conclusion of last winter, your applause has alone given a value to my performances, and I would not linger here till the infirmities of age might so diminish my claims to your approbation, that my efforts would only ‘claim respect for what they had been.’ I have struggled through six of Shakespeare’s ‘Seven ages’—have been the ‘whining schoolboy’—‘the sighing lover’—‘the bearded soldier’—‘the justice,’

‘In fair round belly with good capon lined’—

have portrayed ‘the lean and slippered pantaloan,’ but would not pain you by realising that ‘last scene of all,’ the

‘Second childishness, and mere oblivion,
Sans teeth, sans eyes, sans taste, sans everything.”

I fear my over tendency to prattle this evening, savours a little too much of the old man already; but I must crave you to bear with me a few minutes longer, while I again ‘*traverse my cart*,’ and express my great gratification at having my last season here aided by the dis-

tinguished talents of my kind and valued friend Mackay—long may his graphic and inimitable delineations of Scottish character be spared to us. To the whole body of my performers I owe my heartfelt thanks for their constant kindness and assistance. I shall leave them with great regret, and the most ardent wishes for their happiness and success; and to every member of this establishment, high and low, I publicly tender my thanks. To that distinguished master of his art, Mr John Kemble, and his illustrious sister, Mrs Siddons, my youth was deeply indebted. My respectful and grateful veneration for the memory of my patron, Sir Walter Scott, is too well known to need repetition. There is another person, not so well known to you, ladies and gentlemen, but to whose instructions I owe so much, that I should be highly ungrateful if, on an occasion like the present, I did not express my thanks to my earliest master, Mr Charles Farley of London, to whose exquisite taste and great ability in the production of spectacle, the Theatre Royal, Covent Garden, owed much of its prosperity. I am sure it will please Mr Farley to find that his favourite pupil gratefully remembers and acknowledges his kindness. One name yet lingers on my tongue, in any compliment to which I am sure you will most cordially join, when I mention that of the late Sir William Allan. He honoured me with the most brotherly affection, guided me by his counsel, often aided me by his transcendent talent, and I own it was his death which decided my resigning management. And now, ladies and gentlemen, I have but one duty to perform, though how to discharge that duty—the expression of the debt of gratitude I owe to you—I know not. The unfading popularity you have honoured me with for upwards of forty years has been, in its duration and intensity, almost, if not quite unparalleled in theatrical annals. I proudly, gratefully acknowledge it, though I feel that I owe it to your kindness more than any merit of my own. I boasted at the commencement of this address that I should retire ‘no man’s debtor.’ I spoke hastily, and ask you to excuse me—I must to my latest moments remain yours, unless, in mitigation, you can think with Milton, that

‘A grateful mind
By owing owes not, but still pays—at once
Indebted and discharged.’

Ladies and gentlemen, if, in the course of my long management of your Theatre, I have to any one given offence, I respectfully ask their pardon; and with the most sincere prayers that every blessing and happiness may long be showered upon you and yours, your old and faithful servant sighs forth—Farewell.

Murray’s last season at the Adelphi opened on May 31st 1851 with *Belphegor the Mountebank*, which was then played for the first time here.

On June 7th *The Cotton Spinners; or, all that Glitters is not Gold*, by Thomas and J. M. Morton, from the London Olympic. Sir Arthur Lassell = Lyons; Mr Jasper Plum = W. Cooper; Stephen Plum = Wyndham; Frederick Plum = F. A. Robinson; Toby Twinkle = H. Webb; Harris = Charles Lloyds; Lady Leatherbridge = Miss Cleaver; Lady Valeria Westendleigh = Miss J. Bassano; Martha Gibbs = Miss Parker.

July 22nd, *Love in a Maze*, by Dion Boucicault. C. D. Pitt joined the company on September 4th, from which date until the final evening of the season—October 22nd—nothing of note took place.

October 22nd, "Last night of the present Company."

MR MURRAY'S
FAREWELL BENEFIT

AND
LAST APPEARANCE,
When will be performed
Sheridan's Comedy, in five Acts, entitled
THE RIVALS;

OR, A TRIP TO BATH.

Sir Anthony Absolute = Murray; Captain Absolute = Wyndham; Acres = Lloyd; Sir Lucius O'Trigger = Josephs; Falkland = Edmund Glover; David = Saker; Fag = Lyons; Coachman = Kimber; Lydia Languish = Miss Parker; Lucy = Miss Marian; Mrs Malaprop = Miss Nicol; Julia = Miss Frankland.

At the end of the comedy a favourite fantasia on Scotch airs on the violin by Mr Alexander Mackenzie. To be followed by the favourite scene from Sir Walter Scott's novel of St Ronan's Well, entitled *The Cleikum Inn*. Francis Tyrrel = Bellair; Captain O'Tusk = Wyndham; Mr Bindloose = G. Webster; Meg Dodds = Mackay.

After which Mr Murray will have the honour of delivering

HIS FAREWELL ADDRESS.

The whole to conclude with Shakspeare's drama of *Catherine and Petruchio*.

Petruchio = Powrie; Gremio = H. Webb; Baptista = Channing; Hortensio = Bellair; Music Master = Lyons; Taylor = Josephs; Biondello = Saker; Cook = Selwin; Catherine = Miss Frankland; Bianca = Miss J. Bassano; Curtis = Miss Nicol.

Previous to the performance of *Catherine and Petruchio*, Murray appeared before the curtain, and amid the most unanimous expressions of enthusiasm from a magnificent audience, delivered the following address:—

"LADIES AND GENTLEMEN,—It was within these walls that, on the 10th of November * 1809, I had the honour of making my first appearance before you, and it is within the same walls that I again appear before you, endeavouring to express to you the deep and grateful sense I entertain of all the kindness, the consideration, the forbearance you have evinced towards me during my long and motley course of two-and-forty years, and to perform the melancholy duty of saying farewell to those I have so much reason to love and to respect. As many may remember, my earliest efforts here were anything but successful, and I have great reason to rejoice that they were not. My father was an actor of distinguished talent in London, and so great a favourite with the public and his professional brethren, that on my entrance into the Theatre Royal, Covent Garden, under the auspices of Mr Kemble, I was so petted and favoured on my father's account, that I came before you with all the levity and conceit natural to a boy of nineteen. But your frowns, and the darkness of my reception here, taught me to know myself, and to discover that I was not the 'admirable Crichton' I had vainly imagined. With determined industry, and doggedly, as Dr Johnson says, I set myself to remedy my defects. You, for a time, persisted in your disapprobation—I was resolute in my efforts to improve; you hissed—I laboured, until I fairly won your smiles, and you began kindly to regard the stripling who strove so unremittingly to please you. To

* This is not correct; his first appearance was on November 20th. See page 260.

be brief, I rose in your favour. Painful circumstances made me the manager of your theatres; and while, like others in my situation, I could wish undone many things which have been done, and have left unattempted many others I could have wished performed, yet, considering the names of the great artists I yearly brought before you, the talents of the resident company, the merits of the pieces annually produced, and the manner in which they were brought forward, I do not think the court before which I have the honour of pleading will refuse me their verdict of approbation. To my successors in the management of the two theatres I wish, sincerely wish, every prosperity they can wish themselves. They will profit by my blunders; they are both in the prime of life, both of distinguished talent in their profession, both highly popular; and I earnestly desire for them

‘Calm seas, auspicious gales,
And sail so expeditious, that shall catch
Their mimic fleets far off’—

wafting them into the havens of a golden fortune. To my professional brethren I feel deeply indebted for their kind and gratifying aid on this occasion. To Mr Glover I owe many acts of liberal kindness, and I feel great pleasure in acknowledging my obligations towards him. By Mr Lloyd’s kind assistance I am peculiarly obliged, as it proves the cordial feelings of regard which exist between us. I have further to thank him for his great courtesy in postponing the opening of the Theatre Royal until after the engagement of the Miss Batemans here. To your distinguished favourite, Mr Powrie, I owe many, many thanks. But what shall I say to my old, tried, and valued friend, Mr Mackay, who, as he once by his talents saved the Theatre Royal, has this season, by the attraction of his unfading abilities, greatly diminished the losses the Crystal Palace had entailed upon me.

‘We have clamb the hill thegither,
And now are toddlin’ down,’—

but I earnestly hope that while we remain on the pages of ‘the world’s volume,’ the Bailie and the Major may cling together in the firmest bonds of friendship, for the sake of ‘auld lang syne.’

“To the performers, orchestra, and servants of this establishment, I return my best thanks for their constant kindness to me, and cannot refrain from expressing the great pride and gratification I feel at the splendid testimony of their affection and regard with which they honoured me this morning; and also offer my grateful acknowledgments to the trustees and shareholders of this Theatre for their unvarying liberality and attention, and I trust they will not think that the reputation of the Adelphi has suffered in my hands.

‘And now, my kind and liberal patrons, ’tis time for me to furl my professional sails, and say farewell to those to whom

‘All my service
In every point twice done, and then done double,
Were poor and single business to contend
Against the honours deep and broad’

you’ve showered on me. Some of my friends have led me to hope that rest and retirement may so restore me to my former self, that I may occasionally revisit the ‘glimpses of our theatrical moon.’ Should that hope be denied me, and this, indeed, be the last appearance I shall ever have the honour of making before you, be assured, that though the years of your old servant be allowed to ‘stretch into extremest age,’ the last, the most cherished worldly recollection that trembles on his fading memory, will be the evenings he has spent in your service

and, above all, that in which he now again thanks the brilliant assemblage before him for many, many years of kindness, and with deep, respectful, and fervent gratitude, bids you—Farewell.”

According to the published account of W. F. Lloyd, the comedian, when Murray retired from the stage he was not only in bad health, a fact which he himself stated, but was so thoroughly tired of his profession and everything connected with it, that he gave away his private wardrobe to his friends, and burnt every document that reminded him of his long connection with the boards, including a beautifully kept and interesting diary extending over a period of twenty-one years. This may or may not have been the case, but it is an undeniable fact that Murray fulfilled engagements both in Aberdeen and Dundee after he had retired from the boards in Edinburgh. He did not require to do this for the sake of money, as he was quite independent, so he must surely have felt some pleasure in the work, or he would not have broken in upon his newly acquired rest so soon. There is no doubt that he had grown more and more of a morose and melancholy disposition as age crept upon him, and among other curious phases of character which distinguished him, he had a constant and ever increasing dread that bankruptcy would overtake him. Discipline and routine were throughout his career inseparable companions. The affairs of the Theatre were executed with the regularity of a Government office; rehearsals, treasury, and all the other duties were faultlessly looked after, and woe betide the luckless individual who dared, either through negligence or any other reason, to interfere with the regular working of the Theatre. It will easily be conceived that all these traits in his character, coupled with an austere demeanour, led many people to judge him harshly and speak of him in far too severe a strain. To actors he was generally a warm friend; he did not give enormous salaries, but what he did pay was paid to the day and hour; although he seldom spoke to the members of his company, he invariably treated them with politeness and gentlemanly, if exacting, courtesy, which he fully expected should be reciprocated. As illustrating this, it may be mentioned that it was his custom never to re-engage a member of his company for another season unless the member in question went through the formality of “writing in” to request a renewal.

Towards dramatic authors his conduct was perhaps not so estimable. What Planché openly states regarding Murray’s conduct with regard to the production of *Charles XII.* is undoubtedly true, and probably was not

a solitary case of the same sort of thing. To the public Murray, all through his long connection with the Scottish stage, was a faithful, untiring, and devoted servant; and to him almost entirely, is due the high status which the Edinburgh stage maintained for so long among provincial theatres.

Lloyd, in speaking of the long time he had served under Murray, says:—"During the whole of the time not one angry word passed between us—a pretty good proof that I could not have been a very bad servant or he a very bad master." Murray took great interest both in Lloyd and in Montague Stanley, giving them constant and valuable advice in acting. "'My two boys,' Murray used to call us," Lloyd continues in his Autobiography, "but we never presumed upon his partiality for us, seldom addressed him unless spoken to, and never held out a hand to shake unless he had first proffered his own; for, be it understood, he was a peculiar man—remarkably staid, as a rule frightfully low-spirited, very proud, but withal a perfect gentleman in every sense of the word—the Napoleon of managers, a most strict disciplinarian, straightforward and honourable in all his dealings, and a thorough man of business."

One peculiarity of Murray's was, that he insisted upon every member of his company *acting* at rehearsal exactly as they intended to do at night. Lloyd was one of the few who were allowed to break through this rule: as for Murray himself, he often went through his part with the utmost care and elaboration while suffering severe bodily pain—and all in order to set a good example to his company.

Benson Hill relates of Murray in 1826 the following anecdotes:—

"Our Ellangowan (Bertram)* had once accompanied our theatrical Viceroy on a sporting excursion to the foot of the Highlands. After shooting till day declined, they put up *at* and *with* an inn for dinner; which ended, the elder said to the waiter with much dignity,

"'Have you a playhouse here, my man?'

"'Ech, fine, sir; oot by, jist!'

"'Ah, then maybe we shall kill an hour or two by patronising the poor devils. Can they do things decently, d'ye know?'

"'Deed do they, vera, conseedrin'; the hoose is but sma', and the creturs pickit up onywhere. Ye canna expec' things to be preceesly as gude as in yer *ain* Theatre o' Edinburgh, Mr William Murray.'

"The manager, who believed himself *incog.*, was much tickled by this recognition.

"A less agreeable incident befel him, on some journey, at the house of an old 'leddy,' too deaf to have caught his name. She, as a child, had actually seen Prince Charles, and dilated enthusiastically on his misfortunes.

* Thorne.

“ ‘Open foes, ye’ll allow,’ said she, ‘are o’er eneuch, sir, for a doomed race ; but their worst enemies were pretended freens. And the maist ungratefu’ traitor that ever disgraced the cause was that fause loon, Secretary *Murray*.* *Curses on the name !* ’ ”

Besides his undoubtedly great abilities, both as actor and manager, Murray claims attention as a successful dramatist. He adapted an interlude from *How to die for Love*, which he called *Diamond Cut Diamond*. *Cramond Brig*, *Mary Queen of Scots*, *Gilderoy*, *Rhomeo and Guilietta* (a burlesque on *Romeo and Juliet*), were among some of his successful efforts. Many of his adaptations were never claimed by him—*Oliver Twist*, for instance : and although George Daniel states Francis Reynolds to be the author of *No*, there seem to be some grounds for believing that Murray really wrote it. In writing these pieces, Murray does not seem to have aimed at literary excellence ; but, on the other hand, his acquaintance with the stage and the company he was writing for was so intimate that his plays always proved successful. At the same time it should be mentioned that he was not above borrowing (without acknowledgment) pretty freely from other authors. From a literary standpoint his famed “farewell addresses” stand quite alone, not only as productions of Murray’s, but as models of such things. From first to last they are witty, concise, neat, and always appropriate and in good taste, and when aided by the wondrous humour and skill of the speaker, must have proved irresistible.

Murray was born about 1790. He was twice married : firstly, to Miss Dyke (sister of Mrs Thomas Moore), and secondly, to Miss Gray (a member of the company, and who died at an advanced age during the early spring of the present year, 1888). He left several children : one daughter became an excellent reader ; and a son, Henry (now dead), tried the stage pretty late in life.

Murray’s death was very sudden. He had retired to live in St Andrews, and was taken ill returning from a party on May 5th 1852, and died in a few hours.


* W. H. Murray was a grandson of the Pretender’s Secretary.

S I X T H P E R I O D,

1851 to 1888.

CHAPTER XXII.

THE NEW MANAGEMENTS.

HE winter season of 1851-2, which now commenced, ushered in a new theatrical era in Edinburgh. The monopoly which Murray had so long and so successfully maintained was, by his retirement, broken up ; many old things were about to pass away, and new ideas, new economy in the management, and young blood, were to bring about in the course of a few years a complete change in the dramatic life of Edinburgh. It is not forty years since Murray retired, and yet what enormous changes have taken place since that event ! To those who remember the old stock system which prevailed even twenty years ago, it is not so difficult to appreciate the greatness of the changes that have been going on ; but for the younger generation of playgoers, who have known nothing of stock companies, it is scarcely possible to estimate the greatness of the difference. Probably fewer changes in dramatic economy, routine, and administration took place during the whole forty-two years of Murray's connection with Edinburgh than did during any five years that followed his retirement. Wyndham's reign was brilliant in many respects, although the times were such that only the most skilful and clever management was able to follow the fluctuations in dramatic supply and demand. With the extension of the railway system, Edinburgh, in common with other provincial towns, ceased to have an existence as a local centre, and became more and more an extension or chapel of ease to London. In Art, whether painting, music, or drama, this was particularly the case, and so much so in the histrionic line, that in the present age, and for many years past, our theatres have been nothing more nor less than buildings with resident manager, orchestra, scene painter (sometimes), carpenters, and money takers, in which performances are given by companies from London.

The history, not only of the past eighteen years, when travelling companies have reigned supreme, but of the last fifty years of the drama, has yet to be written.* In the present work no more can be done than to note the local changes as they occurred from time to time.

The greater part of Wyndham's reign was in a transitional period, in which, as already said, old things were passing away and new things making their appearance from time to time ; the finger of fate, or shall we say, the barometer, pointing steadily to the word "change."

On the retirement of Murray the theatrical monopoly was divided, the Royal passing into the hands of Lloyd, the comedian, while the lease of the Adelphi was secured by Wyndham.

The former house was the first to open its doors, and on the 22nd of November, after much speculation had been indulged in by playgoers and the press alike as to the probable success of two Theatres, a large audience assembled in Shakspeare Square to patronise the new management. Seldom had a more brilliant scene been witnessed within the old walls. The following account of what took place is from the pages of a contemporary journal called *The Theatre* :—

"The interval between the opening and the rising—or rather *drawing*—of the curtain was spent by the audience in examining the new and handsome decorations, which do great credit to the taste of Mr Lloyd, and in lustily cheering the more distinguished visitants as they arrived. The entrance of Mr Glover, the late co-partner of Mr Lloyd, and now sole manager of the Prince's Theatre, Glasgow, was announced by the utterance of his name from hundreds of voices, and several rounds of applause, which he acknowledged with a standing bow ; but we were particularly gratified with the enthusiastic reception given to Mr Wyndham, the manager of the rival theatre, whose attendance evinced the existence of cordiality and friendship between those whose position tends to produce estrangement. The whole Theatre rose on his appearance, and for several minutes the huzzas were absolutely deafening. To these tokens of esteem and regard Mr Wyndham feelingly responded ; and scarcely had the echoes died away ere the curtain divided and discovered the entire company assembled on the stage in appropriate arrangement. The Queen's anthem was then sung with great animation, after which Mr Lloyd stepped forward and delivered the following speech amid great applause :—

'LADIES AND GENTLEMEN,—Accept my warmest thanks for this kind, very kind, patronage this evening, and for your hearty welcome to your old friend. (Applause.) I appear before you, I confess, under great disadvantage, when I remember how soon I have succeeded to my illustrious predecessor. I am, therefore, I feel, totally unable to address you in the manner to which you have been accustomed, for

* It is to be hoped that William Archer, the one man living who has shown himself capable of such work, will at some early date take up the subject in a manner worthy of its importance.

‘Rude am I in speech,
And little blessed with the set phrase of *Murray*.’

(Laughter.) I therefore request you to understand that I feel I am not succeeding to the throne of any ordinary theatrical monarch, but the Napoleon of men—a good general too, and an excellent *minister of finance*. (Laughter and applause.) I therefore must humbly request you to receive this, my maiden speech, as a mere business one, and only let me off with as small a share of pity for my presumption as possible, and I promise to learn my lesson better in future. In the first place, ladies and gentlemen, may I hope that the alterations and improvements meet your approbation. (Great cheering.) We have a great deal to do yet, but considering that we have had but six weeks, or little more than that, I think you will do us the justice to say that we have not been idle. (Cheers.) In the next place, you will have to sit in judgment on the new performers, who will appear before you to-night for the first time. I request you will give them a patient hearing; sincerely trusting that your verdict will be in their favour. Remember the peculiarities of new actors require some time to gain on the public; but only favour them with a patient hearing, and I have no doubt that in time they will become favourites. Perhaps it will not be out of place now to tell you something connected with a circumstance of the same sort which occurred to myself when I had first the honour of appearing before you upwards of twenty years ago. I remember the morning after I appeared going to the news-room to read the criticisms—(a laugh)—fancying that something would be said about myself, for I thought myself much more clever than I do now. I took up the paper and commenced thus :—‘Last night a Mr Lloyd made his first appearance, and we hope it will be his last. He is supposed to be a comedian. Well! what shall we say of that—the least said the soonest mended. *N.B.*—Smacks sail from Leith to London twice a week!’ (Great laughter and applause.) This was certainly a very polite hint for me to depart, but, as Mr Mathews says, ‘I diddled.’ No, ladies and gentlemen, I persevered, and by industry and your kind encouragement, I gradually grew into your favour. I trust, therefore, I shall long continue so; and only confer the same favour on my performers this evening, and you will grant an additional obligation on your obedient, grateful servant.”

Thus was the opening under the new management signalled by every appearance of success, a condition which, unfortunately, was not destined to continue. Lloyd in his “Autobiography” gives the misfortunes connected with his management in the following brief order:—

“No. 1.—My opening night had nearly proved a closing one as well. Half an hour before the time for opening the doors, a smell of burning was perceived on the stage, and smoke was seen issuing from between the lining of the stage private box and the lining on the stage side of it. This space had been filled up with sawdust to deafen the sound, and somehow or other it had caught fire. The lining next the stage was immediately torn down, when the sawdust was discovered to be in a red glow, which the sudden admittance of air caused to burst into a flame. Fortunately, however, we were soon able to get this extinguished, and after several bottles of lavender water had been thrown about to destroy the smell of fire, the doors were opened. No. 2.—I had a company upwards of one hundred strong, with salaries ranging from £1 to £12 per week. No. 3.—Very ominous. My opening piece was *Used Up*. No. 4.—My law agent’s name was *Bringlow*, and he lived in *Walker Street*.”

There is no doubt that the company Lloyd had engaged was unnecessarily large, besides which it was badly selected. Several lines of acting had two and even three representatives, while others were without a single exponent. Scottish characters, for instance, were entirely unrepresented. The orchestra employed under A. Mackenzie was an unusually large one, consisting of twenty performers, besides which there were five scene painters, headed by Wilson. *Used Up* was the opening piece, and *The Village Nightingale*, which followed, was played for the first time here. Harcourt Bland, H. Webb, and Miss Eliza Nelson played in the latter.

On the 25th, Miss Fanny Vining, the leading lady, made her first appearance as Constance in the *Love Chase*, a performance which gained her considerable applause.

On December 3rd, the "American tragedian," Davenport, appeared as "The Stranger," being his first time of playing in Scotland; he made a decided impression—one critic remarking that Macready's mantle had descended upon him.

Lloyd's bad management began very soon to show itself. Mrs Weston only appeared once; Misses Vining, Manners, Leslie, and Bland all left very soon after the season opened. Morgan and Wentworth, the leading men, only appeared a few times during November and December, and then left. Brindal seems to have been a failure, and so his parts were given to others. In place of these, new engagements were made; Miss Mortimer (Mrs Billington) joined as leading lady in place of Miss Vining. Henry Haigh, tenor, came over from the Adelphi. Billington (now of Toole's company) joined as walking gentleman; Fred Lloyd, the manager's son, and a promising comedian, also came to swell the already too full ranks along with Bruce Norton, a good Scottish and heavy actor from the Surrey Theatre. Wentworth and Morgan being gone, the leading business was chiefly in the hands of Harcourt Bland and Bruce Norton, both capable actors. Bland was a fine, tall, handsome man, and made a most gentlemanly light comedian and excellent juvenile tragedian. His Macduff, Robert Macaire, Miles Bertram, and Mercutio, were all more than ordinarily good performances, and he was, in addition to his histrionic abilities, a man of considerable reading and scholarly attainments. He settled in Glasgow as a teacher of elocution, and died there 18th November 1875. His real name was Beatty. Bruce Norton was a very versatile actor. He played Macbeth, Shylock, Othello,

and similar parts with great effect, and his melo-dramatic parts were allowed to be first-rate, while his acting of Scottish characters, at a time when George Webster, Gourlay, Mungall, Watt, and the great Mackay were all living, was considered second almost to none. Besides these lines, he used to play eccentric comedy and burlesque, and on one occasion at least he assumed the rôle of Joseph Surface. His faults were innate coarseness, which he could never get entirely rid of, and an inveterate love of practical joking on and off the stage. He died November 26th 1861.

At the beginning of this season H. J. Craven was appointed "principal stage director," but a few weeks afterwards Cooper was announced as "stage manager." Craven married Miss Nelson, a member of the company.

On December 26th the Christmas pantomime *Harlequin Prince Agib; or, Little Blossom and the Seven Dwarf Hunchbacks of the Sunny Valley*, was produced. The opening was written by Fred Lloyd, but although clever in some points, it was terribly wordy. The author acted the part of Queen Pandorous; his father, the Demon; Prince Agib = Villiers; Little Blossom = Mdlle. E. A. Louin; The King = Wooldridge; and the Chief of the Seven Hunchbacks = Miss Marie Wilton (now Mrs Bancroft). In the comic part Deulin was Clown; Anderson, Pantaloon; C. Brown, Harlequin; Miss J. Power, Columbine; Miss Woodyer, Harlequina; and Wooldridge, "Gent of 1851-2." This pantomime hardly held its own against *Gulliver* at the Adelphi, where, as will be seen, Mrs Wyndham gave the first proof of her unrivalled powers of training children and directing spectacle.*

On January 1st, 2nd, and 3rd an innovation was made in having two performances *per diem*. On the evening of the 2nd, a new Scottish drama entitled *Dougal the Piper*, founded on "The Highland Widow," was produced. On the 8th, *The Ladies' Battle*, for the first time. Miss Fanny Vining played Mrs Stirling's great part of the Countess, and the other characters were as follows:—Leonie = Miss Leslie; Henri de Flavigneul = Leslie; The Baron = Cooper; Gustave de Grignon = H. Webb. Why a low comedian should have been thrust into this fine light comedy part it is difficult to conceive, especially when Bland and Craven were both available.

* During the run of Prince Agib, Deulin, the Clown, on at least one occasion made a speech, declaring that persons were sent up from the Adelphi to hiss the Royal pantomime!

On January 13th, J. W. Strang—the well-known teacher and tenor singer, for many years precentor at Free St George's—made his first appearance on the stage, and sang "The Death of Nelson." He afterwards played Blue Peter in *Black-Eyed Susan*.

On January 16th *Rob Roy* was splendidly produced, the bills stating that 120 persons were employed in the performance; the highland fling was danced by 28 dancers, and 70 persons took part in one of the combats. Mackay was specially engaged for the Bailie. Bland, in the absence of E. L. Davenport, took Rob Roy, and although the part was not in his usual line, scored a great success. A better Dougal than Bruce Norton could scarcely have been found, nor could Cooper have been improved upon as Owen. Lloyd was very good as Galbraith, and Loveday, although quiet, made an effective Rashleigh; Haigh and Miss Nelson acquitted themselves very well in the vocal department, as did Miss Cruise in the Tramp Chorus. Miss Vining was the Helen; Miss Marië Wilton, Martha; Madame Victor, Mattie; and Miss Nicol, Jean M'Alpine. Lloyd, not satisfied with his own staff of scene painters, with his usual extravagance, brought through Fred. Fisher from Glasgow. Nine nights seems a poor run for so fine a production, but that is all it extended to. Other Scottish pieces revived were *Heart of Midlothian*, *Guy Mannering*, and *Cramond Brig*, in which Mackay played Dumbiedykes, Dominie Sampson, and Jock Howieson; Bruce Norton being the Ratcliffe, Dandy Dinmont, and King James. The next revival was *Macbeth*, on February 2nd, when Miss Glyn played Lady Macbeth, and Bruce Norton, Macbeth.

On February 12th Mrs Stirling made her first appearance here, playing Adrienne Lecouvreur.

On March 3rd, *Romeo and Juliet*. Juliet = Miss Anna George, from the Theatre Royal, Hull, her first appearance here; after which *Cramond Brig*. Jock Howieson = Bruce Norton, his first appearance in that part.

On March 15th *Rob Roy* was again put on, the title rôle on this occasion being played by Davenport, his first time of playing that part. Bailie Nicol Jarvie = Mackay.

Belphegor the Mountebank, which had been produced by Murray during his last season, was got up by Lloyd, and performed on April 1st. His management on this occasion is one, among many, instances of Lloyd's foolish extravagance and lack of managerial ability. Webb, who was in his company, and who had played the hero under Murray, was passed over, and Glover from Glasgow specially engaged to play the part.

Silver likewise was engaged to play Lavarennnes, which Norton or Love-day would most likely have done better, and certainly in such a character as Madame Marcette, Mrs Archbold (also specially engaged) can scarcely have done better than Miss Nicol would.

A contemporary criticism says, "Miss Wilton as Henrie has a nice figure and appropriate action, and she 'played up' to Glover throughout the whole play admirably, her scene in the chateau being a splendid piece of acting." The same critic,* in another place says, "Little Miss Wilton, we predict, will soon be great Miss Wilton in fame. She does everything she is entrusted with in the best style."

The Corsican Brothers was produced at the "Adelphi" from a more or less pirated edition, and very soon afterwards at the "Royal" (April 12th 1852). The version produced at the latter house was the same as originally produced at the Princess's, London. Bland played the Brothers; Chateau Renaud = H. Leslie; The Rival Corsicans = Watkins and Bruce Norton; Emilie = Miss Mortimer; Marie = Madame Victor; Madame dei Franchi = Miss Nicol. The whole cast was excellent, and the play well put upon the stage; but comparisons were freely made between this and the Adelphi version, generally in favour of the latter, which, with Davenport and Wyndham's acting in the two chief parts, must have been excellent.

On April 15th a benefit was given for the Royal Infirmary, but notwithstanding the sterling nature of the charity to be benefited, and the production of a piece new to the Edinburgh boards, namely, *Pauline*, the house was miserably poor.

The benefits followed soon after. Miss Nicol had *Spoiled Child*, in which Miss Wilton played "Little Pickle."

Lloyd took his benefit on Friday, May 14th; it had been announced for the previous Wednesday, but was postponed on account of Murray's funeral, and the Theatre was closed on both the Wednesday and Thursday evenings. On the night of his benefit Lloyd made an excellent speech, in which he referred to the sudden death of the late manager, and spoke of the result of the season, so far, with cheerfulness.

The winter season at the Royal closed on May 22nd, and before noticing the succeeding summer season it will be well to go back and see what Wyndham had been doing at the Adelphi during the winter.

* *The Theatre.*

This Theatre was occupied for a few nights by the Bateman children (Kate and Ellen, then eight and six years of age), who opened on October 28th, after which Wyndham obtained possession of the building, and made great exertions to have the Theatre thoroughly renovated. He put in a new stage, and, after gutting the auditorium, had it done up again in the best possible manner. Besides these necessary repairs, the outside was considerably altered, so that it presented, according to a contemporary account, a "neat and chaste appearance, very different from the dark, dingy, *barn-looking* aspect it formerly bore." The pit was enlarged so as to extend beneath the boxes and new seats provided, while the first few rows were upholstered in a comfortable manner, and partitioned off as orchestra stalls. A heavy, handsome gasolier was suspended to the roof, and altogether the "house" looked neat and tasteful, and was comfortable and commodious. The stage, besides being entirely renewed, was greatly benefited by the removal of some spirit shops which had formerly occupied a portion of the space beneath. All these extensive alterations cost Wyndham a lot of money, but by his judicious and spirited catering for the public, he was able to make it up again before long.

By dint of great exertions everything was ready, and the Theatre opened on Saturday, 27th December, when the house was crowded in every part. After "God save the Queen" had been sung by the entire company, Mr and Mrs Wyndham delivered a rhyming address. The comedy of *The School for Scandal* was acted. Wyndham himself played Charles Surface with all the gentlemanly ease he was so famous for, and which is so well remembered by our older playgoers. Anthony Younge was the Sir Peter Teazle; Miss Hill, Lady Teazle; Holmes was the Joseph; James, Sir Oliver; E. Saker, Moses; Lyons, Trip; Josephs, Crabtree; Eburne, Sir Benjamin; Miss Cleaver, Mrs Candour; and Miss Webster, Maria. Miss Hill and Younge were called before the curtain at the conclusion of the comedy, as well as Mr and Mrs Wyndham, the latter being almost smothered with bouquets as she retired.

The farce of *That Rascal Jack* followed, in which Herbert played his original part of the Rascal Jack.

In the selection of his company Wyndham did wisely in retaining the services of as many as possible of the old set. Among these were Miss Cleaver, stately and majestic; Miss Parker, neat and sprightly; T. Powrie, Edward Saker; Josephs, a most useful actor; Lyons, &c. Besides these

he had made a selection of new talent, excellent with regard both to quantity and quality. Miss Mary Hill, from Manchester; Miss Kate Kirby and Miss Webster, from Birmingham; Anthony Younge, from Sadler's Wells; Herbert, from London, &c.

It is well to note that Wyndham considerably reduced his rates of admission. The boxes and box stalls (dress circle) were now 2s. 6d.; pit (or orchestra) stalls, 2s.; pit, 1s.; gallery, 6d.; half-price, 1s. 6d. and 1s.

The pantomime was produced on December 29th. The title was *Gulliver's Travels; or, the Kingdom of Lilliput*, and proved a distinct success. This was largely owing to the splendid training of a Lilliputian army, consisting of a band of some sixty children, who were divided into three companies, and headed by Miss Annie Parker. The training was entirely done by Mrs Wyndham, who on this occasion gave the first proof of her wonderful genius for such work. Mungall and Saker were Clown and Pantaloon, and Miss Kate Kirby was the Columbine.

Rob Roy was brought out at this house on January 17th, the evening following its production at the Royal; and notwithstanding the attraction of Mackay at the senior house, Wyndham's production was much the more successful. At the Royal the Bailie was the attraction, but at the Adelphi Rob Roy himself was the notable personage. This part was in the hands of Powrie, who, as many still remember, made an admirable Highland outlaw. It is said that he studied the part under Langley, who had been stage manager to Corbet Ryder—the original and, it is always said, the best Rob Roy that ever appeared. Gourlay, who played the Bailie, was probably the best in the part after Mackay. He had been trained, indeed, under the veteran; and many who remember the performances of both consider the pupil to have been not much, if at all, inferior to the master. Mungall made a capital Dougal; and Josephs, as Major Galbraith, seems to have made a hit. Miss Cleaver was excellently fitted for such a rôle as that of Helen Macgregor, and Miss Parker and Eburne filled the singing parts successfully.

Again following the lead at the Royal, Wyndham brought out *Macbeth* on February 6th, with Powrie as Macbeth, a part in which he was head and shoulders above Bruce Norton. Miss Cleaver also, as Lady Macbeth, was no mean opposition to put against Miss Glyn. What, however, stamped the Adelphi performance as a success was the effective scenery, which, for the period at any rate, was very elaborate.

On March 18th *Paul the Pilot* was revived and proved an attraction, chiefly on account of the scenery. During the last week in March Davenport and Miss Vining came over from the Royal.

On April 20th a benefit was given for the widow of J. Herbert, the late low comedian of the company, who had been acting until April, when he had a benefit previous to going back to London. He died on April 6th of consumption.

Wyndham got the start of Lloyd in the production of *The Corsican Brothers*, and although the version brought out at the Adelphi was only a pirated one, it unquestionably took best. This was not to be wondered at, seeing that Davenport played the Twin Brothers and Wyndham Chateau Neuf; besides these, E. D. Lyons, Mungall, H. Saker, A. Younge, Miss Cleaver, and Miss F. Vining were all in the cast.

Miss Vining and Davenport remained until the end of April, and before leaving each took a benefit. On her night Miss Vining appeared as Romeo. During the last week of the same month Sam Cowell tickled the ears of large audiences with his inimitable comic songs. On Monday, May 3rd, Phelps, from Sadler's Wells, London, made his first appearance in Edinburgh, playing Richelieu. He only stayed one week, playing Macbeth, Hamlet, and Sir Pertinax Macsycophant (the last for three nights). Ira Aldridge, the African tragedian, played a starring engagement after Phelps left; and about the same time H. J. Craven and his wife (Miss Eliza Nelson) came over from the Royal and joined the Adelphi company. H. J. Craven, who is still living (1888), besides being a clever actor in his time, particularly in character parts, was a successful dramatist, and many of his pieces, such as *Milky White* (in which the author gained a great reputation by his acting of the chief part), *One Tree Hill*, *Meg's Diversion*, &c., are still played. Miss Nelson, whom he married, was a daughter of S. Nelson, the composer, and elder sister of the "Nelson Sisters," afterwards known as Carry and Sarah Nelson, and both well known in Edinburgh in their day.

On the 28th May Miss Cleaver took her benefit, when Mackay played Dumbiedykes in the *Heart of Midlothian*, Mungall being the James Ratcliffe, and Miss E. Nelson the Jeanie Deans. On the following evening Mackay again appeared, this time as Dominie Sampson; and George Webster, a famous Dandie Dinmont, was specially engaged for that part. Eburne was Bertram on this occasion; Verner, Dirk; Josephs, Gabriel; Wyndham, The Colonel; Miss Cleaver, Meg Merrilees; and

Miss Nelson, Lucy Bertram. Wyndham played Claude Melnotte for the first time at his wife's benefit, which took place on May 31st. June 3rd, Mackay again as Dumbiedykes; and on the 7th Phelps commenced a second engagement. On June 11th, in addition to Phelps, Sam Cowell was engaged. On the 12th Phelps took his benefit with *Merchant of Venice* and *Man of the World*, with comic songs by Cowell between. On this evening Anthony Younge, the stage manager and first old man of the company, appeared for the last time as a stock actor at the Adelphi.

The last night of the season was on June 14th, when the programme consisted of the following pieces:—*Look before You Leap*, for the first time in Edinburgh; a new farce by Miss Cleaver called *The Ballybaggerty Bequest*, with Wyndham as the hero—Sir Ballinaslae Ballybaggerty—supported by H. J. Craven, H. Saker, Josephs, Miss Cleaver, Miss Parker, &c.; after which Sam Cowell sang “Billy Barlow,” and then Mr and Mrs Wyndham's address; the whole to conclude with *Robert the Bruce*, Wyndham playing Robert. In the first piece (*Look before You Leap*) Barry, from the Bath Theatre, made his first appearance in the capacity of successor to A. Younge.

Without even a single evening's interval, the summer season opened immediately after the closing of the winter one—namely, on June 15th (1852), the pieces being *The Battle of Waterloo*, *Ploughman turned Lord*, and *The Ballybaggerty Bequest*. In the *Ploughman turned Lord*, Henry Webb made his first appearance, greatly strengthening the company, for he was at the time one of the finest low comedians on the stage. On the 18th he astonished the audience by his powerful acting in the melodramatic part of Giles in *The Miller's Maid*.

A spectacle of great magnificence, founded upon the story of *Aladdin*, was brought out on June 21st. Aladdin = Miss Parker; Abanazar = Charles Verner; Kasrac = Mungall; Kalig (with song) = Eburne; Genius of the Lamp = H. Saker; The Princess = Miss Hill; The Widow = Mrs Newton. Channing painted the scenery for this production, the properties were by Paterson, and Leopold arranged the ballets. *Aladdin* ran as a first piece till July 2nd, and as an after piece till July 16th.

On July 5th Mdle. Emile Grahn, dancer from Her Majesty's Theatre, made her first appearance here, and on the following night Davenport and Miss Vining should have rejoined the company, but owing to the former being detained in Liverpool by illness, their re-appearance did not take place until the 10th.

On July 13th H. J. Craven and his wife reappeared at this Theatre, playing in *The Village Nightingale*, one of his own pieces, with music by S. Nelson (his father-in-law).

On July 26th a new and original drama, called *The Crusaders*, which is stated by a contemporary journal, called the *Weekly Review*, to have been written by Ebsworth, was brought out, with Davenport and Miss Vining in the chief parts. Miss St George made her last appearance on August 14th, and on the 17th, a translation from a French piece, named to suit the Edinburgh performers, *Webb Worried by Wyndham*, was brought out with success.

On Saturday, August 28th, *Rob Roy* was played at Miss Rebecca Isaacs' benefit. Miss Isaacs had been starring at this house for some nights; the cast was as follows:—Rob Roy = Davenport; Rashleigh = Wyndham; Francis = Eburne; The Bailie = G. Webster; Dougal = Mungall; and Helen Macgregor = Mrs Wyndham. On the following Monday (August 30th) H. Saker, Mrs Wyndham's brother, took his farewell benefit before leaving to join the Princess's, London, where he remained a member of the company until his death. During the evening of his benefit he delivered an address, written by W. H. Eburne.

About the beginning of September several of Wyndham's company left him to join Rollison and Leslie at the Royal. Among these were Miss Cleaver, Mrs Newton, Mrs Eburne, and Leopold, the dancer. Eburne also left, but did not go to the senior house. Miss J. Cook joined in place of Mrs Newton. Miss Cook was an excellent impersonator of old women, and although her talents had been completely eclipsed at the Royal by the superior merits of Miss Nicol, she had no rival at the Adelphi, and took her place at once. An actor of the name of Wynne also joined the Adelphi to play utility, as well as Brindall, who, although he had played good parts at the Haymarket and other London houses, seems to have come down in the world when he engaged with Wyndham (he had also been with Lloyd at the Royal, 1851-2). In place of Miss Cleaver, Mrs Wyndham herself appeared in such parts as Lady Macbeth, Meg Merrilees, Helen Macgregor, &c., when necessary.

Notwithstanding that an overwhelming audience assembled in the Royal on the evening of Saturday, September 4th, to inaugurate the new management of Messrs Rollison & Leslie, the Adelphi was likewise packed, to give a hearty reception to Davenport and Miss Vining, who, on that evening, took their benefit. The play was *Merchant of*

Venice, and Davenport and Miss Vining played Shylock and Portia for the first time in Edinburgh. During the evening Miss Vining spoke the following address, which was from the pen of H. J. Craven :—

“ LADIES AND GENTLEMEN,

“ You’ve thought how ill it is,
They don’t remove those Jewish disabilities ;
Unloose the tongue—allow our Hebrew brothers,
Of things political to speak like others.
Is it not harder, if such ills we scan,
That ladies cannot ‘ speak out like a man ’ ?
‘ Oh, don’t address an audience ! Know your stations—
'Tis only *men* should venture on orations :
Of proper modesty it is a breach !’
What rubbish !—for, at least, the gift of speech
No female *disability* you’ll own ;
(The attribute has quite a slander grown.)
And surely over bold it cannot seem,
For us to speak—*when gratitude’s our theme !*

The cant of phrase so oft we hear assign,
To modern days the Drama’s sad decline :—
I don’t believe it ! If true such assumption,
The air of Reekie’s ‘ good for a consumption ;’
For since I knew a moustache from a whisker,
I never saw the Drama looking brisker :—
Old Shakespeare ever and anon peeps forth,
‘ Never say die !’ his motto i’ the north :—
And ever welcomed fresh, with one accord,
Your bold Rob Roy can never be outlaw’d !
(From the steam leg, in thought I can’t dis-sever,
This Rob Roy—’cause *he’ll run and run for ever !*)
Guy Mannering—Mid Lothian, and the Bride
Of Lammermoor in favour still abide :
Your hearts, like Prince’s Street, with truth declare
Scott’s Monument exists for ages there !
To me, a humble artiste, whose desire
To please, in borrowing from your author’s fire
An ember, to illume my efforts ; you
Have prov’d my friends on all occasions true.
Though often warn’d ere venturing to appear,
'Twas *critical* to please the *critics* here—
Presumption aye it’s true position learns,
And burns its fingers *in the land of Burns*.
Your censure or discouragement from me
Has kindly turned—and I have passed *Scot free*.

And though, ambition framing schemes gigantic,
 I may be crossing e'en the wide Atlantic ;
 Or in Australia mounting muslin riggings,
 And playing Mrs Haller at the diggings ;
 Though friends I meet, and foreign mountains view,
 I'll ne'er forget braw Calton Hill and you !”

Webb produced, for his benefit, on the 13th September, *The Betting Boy*, the legitimate version of which had been brought out at the Royal only two nights previously. Webb's version seems to have been undoubtedly the better.

On Wednesday 15th, *The Betting Boy* was again played, with *The Jacobite* as an after piece. In this Lloyd had been specially engaged to perform, and when his voice was heard at the wings immediately previous to his entrance, the house rose with a general shout to greet him, When he was called before the curtain he returned “ thanks for the gratifying reception he had met with.” “ Usually,” he said, “ misfortunes tried and often lost friends ; but such had not been his experience.”

On Wednesday 29th Lloyd took his benefit. Glover came through from Glasgow specially to play Iago, and Davenport was announced as Othello. Before the performance commenced, however, Wyndham had to come before the curtain and apologise for Davenport, who was too unwell to appear. Verner undertook the part, and seems to have made a decided hit as the dusky Moor.

Curiously the date of Lloyd's benefit in 1852 was the exact anniversary of his having become lessee of the Royal, so he mentioned, at least, when returning thanks to the audience on the night in question.

Powrie rejoined the company on October 2nd as Richard III., and on the 25th of the same month the summer season came to an end with Mr and Mrs Wyndham's benefit.

The principal piece was *Henry IV.*, in which Powrie played Hotspur, and Webb, Falstaff. The latter actor was labouring under a severe cold, and so could not make so much of his part as otherwise he undoubtedly would. Wyndham was Henry, Prince of Wales ; and Verner, Henry IV. During the evening Wyndham delivered the following speech :—

“ LADIES AND GENTLEMEN,—Deeply impressed with gratitude for the brilliant assemblage of this evening, and entertaining a due appreciation of the deep responsibility of my position, I have the honour of appearing before you on this the terminating night of our

season, not so much for the purpose of making a set speech, full of empty professions, and perhaps embodying improbable conclusions, but simply and honestly to thank you most gratefully, fervently, and sincerely for the almost unexampled amount of patronage it has been our good fortune to enjoy through a season of unparalleled extent. (Loud cheers.) Little did I think when, from behind the scenes of this theatre, I used to listen with breathless attention to the brilliant and sparkling addresses of our late deeply lamented manager—(cheers)—that I should so soon be called upon in a similar capacity to return thanks for the flattering success of this my first theatrical campaign. (Renewed cheers.) Still less did I anticipate that I, a comparative stranger, should have found friends of sufficient importance to place me in the proud position I have the honour to occupy. (Loud cheers.) And it is a source of continued gratification to us to know that those friends are, one and all, pleased with our exertions—which exertions, I trust, will one day enable us to return their kindness in a more substantial manner than by words, and, at the same time, be the means of reaping a rich harvest for ourselves. (Cheering.) But whether that ‘consummation’ so ‘devoutly to be wished’ should arrive or not, our gratitude to you will not be the less unbounded. (Applause.) It would, perhaps, be uninteresting were I at present to refer to matters of pounds, shillings, and pence, or to the passing cloud which for a time obscured the dawn of our early efforts. I shall content myself by stating that, notwithstanding the shock we then sustained, and the heavy liabilities incumbent upon almost rebuilding the theatre, our books, thanks to your undeviating patronage, show a balance on the right side. (Loud and prolonged cheering.) I am proud to take this opportunity of publicly thanking the proprietors of the Theatre for the cordial assistance, advice, and co-operation they have at all times so readily afforded us—a circumstance which has considerably facilitated our exertions, and rendered our labours comparatively light—for I feel assured they have not only their own interest but ours at heart. I must also return my warmest acknowledgments to the gentlemen of the press for their frequent and flattering notices; and it may not be out of place to assure them that our utmost endeavours will be directed to render the stage what it ought to be—a school for amusement and instruction—‘to show virtue her own feature, scorn her own image, the very age and body of the time its form and pressure.’ (Applause.) It only now remains for me to state that the Theatre will remain closed until Saturday the 6th of November, when we shall commence our winter season with redoubled energy, and with a powerfully augmented dramatic company. (Cheers.) I have also to intimate that, on Monday the 8th, the great and unrivalled tenor singer, Mr Sims Reeves, will have the honour of making his first appearance under the present management—(cheers)—in conjunction with your own Mackay. (Renewed cheers.) I may also add that, during the recess, the interior of the Theatre will be fitted up with additional lustres; and that new lamps from a design of David Bryce, Esq., have been completed, to illuminate the exterior. In conclusion, ladies and gentlemen, allow me, in the name of the company, Mrs Wyndham, and myself, to return you our sincere and grateful thanks; and to bid you, until the 6th of November, a respectful farewell.”

A very few lines will suffice to narrate the conclusion of Lloyd’s management of the Royal. He opened the summer season on May 31st. Mr and Mrs Craven had left the company, as had also Webb, Loveday, and Miss P. Cooke. Miss Power, who had only danced during the winter season, was promoted to being walking lady as well as dancer;

Mrs Simpson took the second old women in place of Miss Cooke (who went to the Adelphi), while the remaining members of the company continued much in the same lines as during the winter.

On June 29th Cooper resigned the stage management, and Bruce Norton took the post ; and on July 10th the season came to an abrupt termination with a benefit to Lloyd, when Glover, from Glasgow, and Wyndham, as well as the entire company, gave their gratuitous assistance in *The Rivals*, *An Address*, *The Imperial Guard*, and *His Last Legs*, Glover playing Faulkland in the first of these pieces, and Wyndham, O'Callaghan, in the last.

Although Lloyd had made a hopeful enough speech at the conclusion of the winter season, there is no doubt that his affairs had become terribly involved even before that time. His management had proved a total failure, the result of want of tact and judgment from first to last. After taking lodgings within the sanctuary of Holyrood until his affairs were set to rights by the lawyers, he emerged from the Bankruptcy Court perhaps a wiser, but certainly a poorer man. After playing a few nights at the Adelphi, as stated a few pages back, he returned to Glasgow and remained as principal low comedian until the final breaking up of the stock system, since which time he has occasionally appeared on the boards he trod for so many years.

The Royal did not remain long without a tenant. Very soon after Lloyd's failure it was let to Messrs Rollison (who had been treasurer to Lloyd), and Henry Leslie (known as a pleasing actor of walking gentlemen and juvenile men). The new managers, to do them justice, commenced in a more judicious and economical way than Lloyd had done. Their company was good, more compact and easily managed than the late one, and included most of the best members of Lloyd's company. Messrs Bland, Cooper, Bruce Norton, Villiers, Watkins, Irwin, G. Fisher, and the versatile Wooldridge, who played almost anything—old men, young men, singing parts, or even clown ; Miss Arden, Miss Nicol, Miss Cruise, Miss Bufton, &c., were among the number ; while from the Adelphi were brought Miss Cleaver, Mrs Eburne, and Mrs Newton. From Sadler's Wells, London, Miss Fanny Bennett came as leading lady ; Miss Somers and Miss Alford came from the Theatre Royal, Glasgow, as second soubrettes ; Tindell played "heavy" to Norton's "lead" ; Haigh and Charles Durand (tenor and baritone) appeared during a portion of the season ; Walton, C. Walton, Sherbrooke, Duff, and

Richardson, were utility men ; and the important post of low comedian was filled by E. W. Gomersal, from Bath. Gomersal was an excellent actor, although not on the same level as either Webb or Lloyd.

A feature in the new company was an excellent ballet. G. Martin was ballet master, and Mdle. Adele was engaged as principal dancer, and proved a great attraction ; she afterwards married a well-known member of the Scottish Bar. Mackenzie was retained as leader of the band, B. Tannett appeared as scene painter, Leslie was stage manager, and Conway, prompter.

As noted above, the Royal opened upon the same evening as Davenport and Miss Vining took their benefit at the Adelphi. The Royal was crowded, a notable feature, a contemporary mentions, being the number of ladies with their families in the boxes. Mackenzie, on appearing to conduct the overture, received a great ovation, which, it may confidently be said, he was well entitled to. "God Save the Queen" was next sung by the entire company, Miss Eliza Arden taking the solo verses ; after which Leslie spoke as follows :—

"For the first time, ladies and gentlemen, I have the honour to appear before you in the deeply responsible situation of one of the managers of your old Theatre Royal. The circumstances that preceded so daring an assumption, are so intimately blended with the meritorious and pains-taking efforts of Mr Lloyd, the late lessee, that I cannot refrain from digressing for a moment, to allude to one whom a kindly, but I fear injudicious liberality, has condemned to an honourable failure. Whilst under his management, both my partner and myself found him a lenient and considerate master, and it affords us a high, but painful gratification, thus publicly to express our sincere sympathy. (Hear, hear.) It has been considered by some a presumptuous effort on the part of two young men to take upon themselves the conduct of so large and important an establishment as this. Believe me, ladies and gentlemen, we should not have done so, but after grave and deliberate consideration. The representations of numerous friends, however, and the promises of support we have received from almost every quarter, determined us. Severally, each would have shrunk from such an undertaking, but in union lies strength ; and united as we are by the close bonds of interest, and the still closer ties of friendship, we nerve ourselves for the task, and trust to our own efforts and earnestness for a successful issue. (Loud cheers.) One bar to your confidence has been suggested to us—our youth, and consequent inexperience. If to be young be criminal, we at once advance our plea of guilty ; but without insulting the memory of that truly distinguished man, by a comparison with myself, I may venture humbly to remark, that when the late Mr Murray assumed the direction of this Theatre, under similar disadvantageous circumstances, he was but a very few months my senior. May I be his humble but sincere disciple, and when I render up my accounts to the tribunal of public opinion, may I come forth as clearly, as honestly, as irreproachably as he did. (Loud cheers.) With youth we bring its hope, its earnestness, its energy—to these we mean to add perseverance—and, yet more, a firm determination to succeed. (Renewed cheers.) I am proud to be called an

Englishman, but I am, if possible, still prouder that my partner is a countryman of your own, a Scotchman, and the first, I believe, who ever assumed a direction in the Theatre Royal of this city ; and when the ardour of the south is tempered by the cool and cautious sagacity of the north, surely we are not too sanguine in anticipating a happy result. (Great applause.) We feel we should be wanting in a duty did we not express our grateful acknowledgment to the proprietors of this Theatre for the very liberal and handsome manner in which, on every possible occasion, they have met us—to those gentlemen who so readily came forward on our behalf, and, in short, to each and every individual whose interests are blended with this establishment ; nor could we, without ingratitude, be silent on the obligations we lie under to the ladies and gentlemen of the late company for the good feeling, friendship, and confidence with which they have, through the inconveniences of a necessarily protracted recess, waited for us till we could again assemble them on the boards where they have so often distinguished themselves. With their most efficient co-operation, aided by that of the able artistes we have culled from other Theatres, we can have no doubt that the representations we shall offer will shed a new lustre on the time-honoured reputation of the Theatre Royal. We have the same obligation to acknowledge to the gentlemen of the orchestra, and to its justly distinguished leader. (Loud applause.) But we cannot choose but feel, ladies and gentlemen, that all our efforts will be useless, all our exertions misapplied, if you withhold the golden meed of your support and approbation. Encourage us but with your smiles—cheer us but with your applause ; and while these in themselves will more than repay us for our exertions in the past, they will stimulate us to fresh toil, fresh endeavour for the future. We can point to nothing that we have as yet done, and we ought to be somewhat chary in boasting what we mean to do ; but suppose us on our trial, we unanimously elect you the jury—kindly reserve your judgment till the termination of our first season, when we have a reasonable confidence that you will be enabled conscientiously to return a verdict in our favour.”

The pieces performed were *By Royal Command* and *Binks the Bagman*, with a “ballet divertissement,” in which Mdlle. Adele and G. Martin, as well as Miss Bufton and Leopold, appeared.

Miss Fanny Bennett, the leading lady of the new company, made her first appearance on September 9th in the play of *Ingomar*, then played for the first time in Edinburgh. On the same evening the burlesque *Robin Hood* was produced. Miss E. Arden was the Robin Hood ; Mrs Eburne, Little John ; Gomersal, Friar Tuck ; while Mdlle. Adele and Martin danced a grand pas de deux in the second act—a contemporary critic * remarking that it was “worth the admission money only to see this lady’s delightful performance.”

On September 11th *The Betting Boy’s Career* was produced, but although Norton’s acting as “Joe Muggins’ Dog” was extremely good, the piece proved quite a failure compared to the version produced by Wyndham at the Adelphi.

* *Weekly Review.*

On September 18th a new version of *Waverley*, in three acts, was produced. Miss Fanny Bennett made a fine appearance as Flora M'Ivor. Gomersal was much applauded as Mrs Nosebag, but lacked, nevertheless, the necessary brogue. Miss Nicol made her first appearance for the season as Mrs Macleary, and received a splendid ovation on her first entrance. Harcourt Bland was Fergus M'Ivor; Bruce Norton, Bradwardine; Leslie, Evan Dhu; Villiers, Captain Waverley; Fisher, the Laird of Balmawhapple; and Miss E. Arden, Daft Davie Gellatly.

The new management altered the time of commencing the performances from half-past seven to seven o'clock. As a result, a great many people—even the box occupants—instead of going to the Theatre late for the first prices, waited until nine o'clock, and got in at half price, a proceeding which did not have a favourable influence on the treasury.

On September 24th the veteran actor T. P. Cooke commenced his farewell engagement. He acted on the opening night as William in *Black Eyed Susan* to a crowded house. On the same evening J. B. Johnston's version of *Uncle Tom's Cabin* was played for the first time here. Uncle Tom = Tindell; Legree = Villiers; Van Tromp = Bruce Norton; George Harris = Leslie. Curiously the characters of Eva and Topsy seem to have been omitted in this version.

On the 4th of October *The Heart of Midlothian* was put upon the stage with the following cast:—Duke of Argyle = H. Bland; George Staunton = Tindell; Dumbiedykes = Bruce Norton; Saddletree = G. Fisher; Reuben Butler = Villiers; Black Frank = Wooldridge; Queen of England = Miss Somers; Jeanie Deans = Mrs Eburne; Mrs Glass = Mrs Newton; Margery = Miss Nicol; Madge Wildfire = Miss E. Arden.

T. P. Cooke took his benefit on Saturday, November 9th, when he played in *Poor Jack* and *Black Eyed Susan*. In the course of the evening he made a speech to the following effect:—

“He remarked that though an interval of eight years had elapsed since his last appearance in Edinburgh, he hoped that the adieu he had now to bid them would not be final. I have always felt (he said) that final leave-taking is a very painful and unnecessary ceremony, and it is a species of professional suicide I do not intend to commit. Allow me, then, to live in the hope of again seeing you. (Cheers.) I know that when I look around for the number of dear friends who have departed since I last appeared before you, it may be a forlorn hope; still, it is a pleasing one, and one you will permit me to indulge in. (Cheers.) Thanking you for the many acts of kindness I have received from you, allow me for the present to say farewell. I may add, that I have offered my services to the management for one night more, as a very poor acknowledgment for the very honourable and gentleman-like

treatment I have received at their hands. True, they are engaged in an arduous struggle, and I cannot commend the good taste or generalship of the opposition which has been offered to my engagement. I do sincerely hope that a discerning public will still support this Theatre, consecrated as it is by so many recollections, dramatic and literary, and a Theatre every way worthy of this, the most splendid metropolis in the world."

His reference to the other house was a gross mistake, and was resented as such by the audience, or at least by the gallery portion thereof, and a hearty cheer for Wyndham was given by the "gods."

On October 20th a new Scottish operetta by James Ballantyne, entitled *The Provost's Daughter*, was produced. The plot of this piece was quite simple, being composed of the loves and escapades of two students—played by Haigh and Wooldridge—who are attached to the Provost's daughter (Miss Rebecca Isaacs), and Margaret Fleming (Miss Eliza Arden). It served to introduce some very pleasing ballads composed and arranged by Mackenzie.

The Theatre was closed for a few evenings during the "preaching" week,* reopening on Tuesday, November 2nd. The winter season proper (1852-3) may be said to commence on this date, notwithstanding the curious division into seasons made by the management (see during December same year). The pieces played on December 2nd were *The Black Domino*, a ballet entitled "La Bouquetiere," and a burlesque of *The Castle of Otranto*. In the last piece Miss P. Horton appeared in her original part of Theodore, and introduced the "Exhibition song of all nations." In the same piece Gomersal made a very good appearance as Manfred.

On Monday, 8th November, *The Fair One with the Golden Locks* was performed, with Miss P. Horton as Graceful, the other pieces on the same evening being *The Little Devil*, *Cramond Brig*, and *Box and Cox*.

On the 10th *Rob Roy* was played, when, according to the bills, "in consequence of numerous applications, and in obedience to the wishes of a great patron of the public," Bruce Norton essayed the part of Bailie Nicol Jarvie. Although it was an excellent performance, he was too burly and youthful in appearance, as well as rough in style. On the following evening he appeared as Macbeth; Lady Macbeth being played by Miss Cleaver; Macduff = H. Bland; and Hecate = Durand.

* A church fast week, when theatres were always closed. In Glasgow and Edinburgh, the observance has now happily been transformed into a public holiday, twice a year

On Saturday, November 20th, Miss Helen Faucit commenced a seven nights' engagement, appearing during the week in several of her best parts ; and, after one or two benefits, the close of the season (although what season is not stated) was announced for December 18th. *The Merchant of Venice* was acted with the following cast :—Shylock = Bruce Norton ; Portia = Miss Cleaver ; Bassanio = Leslie ; Gratiano = H. Bland ; Nerissa = Mrs Eburne. After the play Leslie came forward and made a short speech, in which he stated that the season had been on the whole a financial success, the correctness of which statement may fairly be doubted.

Miss Fanny Bennett now left the company, and the Theatre reopened on December 27th with the pantomime of *Harlequin Lord Lovelle and Nancye Bell*. Scenery by Tannett, masks designed by Alfred Crowquill, and comic business by Wooldridge. This piece seems to have been previously played at the London Surrey, and was splendidly put on the Edinburgh stage. It was universally admitted that Tannett's scenery had rarely been equalled. His first scene, "Haunt of the Fairies by Moonlight," nightly took the audience by storm. The opening was full of good old fashioned fun. Leslie himself played Lord Lovelle ; Fisher, the Baron ; Watkins, Lady Nancy ; and Miss M. Cruise, Oberon. Mdlle. Adele, by her graceful dancing, made a great hit ; nor was the comic part inferior in attractions. Wooldridge, with his extraordinary versatility, astonished every one by making an excellent clown, his imitations of popular dancers being particularly good. Miss Bufton could scarcely have been excelled for grace as Columbine ; Leopold made a good Harlequin ; while Bullock, from Astley's (the only stranger engaged), was Pantaloon.

The pantomime was a great success, but it is to be regretted that during its run a considerable amount of bad feeling was engendered between the rival houses. T. P. Cooke's remarks have already been quoted ; to these Wyndham replied a few nights later ; but during the pantomime, on one particular evening, Leslie, laying aside his grotesque mask as Lord Lovelle, came forward and complained of a few people in the gallery who persisted in hissing, and even hinted that they were sent there for that purpose.

The pantomime was played (with one or more plays added each evening) till February 4th 1853. On January 26th Rollison, one of the lessees, took his farewell benefit, and retired from management. On the 11th of the same month he, with his partner Leslie, had been entertained

to dinner in the Waterloo Hotel by a number of their patrons, and not a word was then said about retirement; so he must have made up his mind pretty suddenly. There can be no doubt that the withdrawal of his capital and assistance in the business department was the chief cause of Leslie's failure. Leslie had neither the money nor experience to conduct such a large establishment alone.

Richelieu was the principal piece played for Rollison's benefit, and Bruce Norton fairly astonished the audience by his splendid acting as the Cardinal, a circumstance the more extraordinary, as he had studied the part in two days.

The next piece of importance produced was *The Jewess; or, the Council of Constance*, adapted from the French opera of *La Juive*. This was put upon the stage in the most sumptuous manner. A procession of over 200 persons crossed the stage, which they left altogether, and crossing the pit upon a platform specially constructed, made their exit by the back of the boxes. Upwards of £700 worth of armour was specially made for it by Granger of Paris, and a splendid ballet, led by Mdle. Adele, Martin, Miss Bufton, and Leopold, was introduced, and the scenery was specially painted by Tannett. The cast was as follows:—Eleazer = B. Norton; Rachael = Miss Arden; The Princess = Mrs Eburne; The Emperor = Waldron; Prince Leopold = H. Bland; The Cardinal de Brogni = Tindell; John Beauchamp = Duff.*

This production cannot have paid Leslie, for it only ran twelve evenings.

On February 19th, a dramatic spectacle, entitled *John of Leyden; or, The Prophet King*, was produced, like the previous piece, with great magnificence. The stage was thrown open to the walls of the Theatre on both sides (as it had also been in *The Jewess*), and in one scene was covered with canvass painted to imitate ice, and a dance of *patineurs* was introduced by Miss Bufton, Leopold, and the *corps de ballet*.

On February 28th Miss P. Horton reappeared, but during her engagement played to very poor houses. The attendance in fact during the whole of this season—in the boxes at anyrate—seems to have been miserably bad.

The Tempest was next produced (March 8th) on the same scale of

* Duff was a son of the former member of the company of that name, and who was so famous as the "Dougal" in *Rob Roy*.

completeness, and Tannett not only painted some fine scenery for it, but acted the part of Prospero, and did it well; it was his first appearance here. The other parts were disposed of as follows:—Ariel = Miss P. Horton; Miranda = Mrs Eburne; Caliban = Bruce Norton; Trinculo = Gomersal; Stephano = Cooper; Sebastian = Duff; Ferdinand = H. Bland.

On the 12th Miss P. Horton took her benefit, when *School for Scandal* was played. Lady Teazle = Miss P. Horton; Mrs Candour = Miss Cleaver; Sir Peter = Cooper; Charles Surface = E. Davis; Sir Benjamin = H. Bland; Lady Sneerwell = Miss Nicol; Sir Oliver = Fisher; Joseph Surface = B. Norton; Moses = Gomersal.

E. Davis had come from Newcastle specially for this benefit.

Several other benefits followed, that on the 19th being announced for A. Mackenzie. During the evening Bland appeared in front of the curtain and intimated that Leslie, who was to have acted in both plays, had not come to the Theatre either for rehearsal or up to that moment, and inquiries that had been made for him had proved fruitless. Charles Verner, late of the Adelphi, undertook Leslie's parts at a moment's notice, and the performance went on. Other benefits, which had been advertised, were given during the following week, but Leslie did not again put in an appearance. Rollison's departure with the greater part of the capital had seriously crippled him, and the poor houses he had had could not have paid him for the enormous outlays he had been at in producing several of the pieces mentioned above. Very soon after his failure, Leslie appeared in London, at Drury Lane, and the Olympic.

On April 6th (1853) a benefit was got up for Martin, who had been ballet master, and who had been disabled by an accident. Glover and Lloyd came through from Glasgow to perform, but there was only a fair house.

After the closing of the Royal, Bland, Cooper, Tindell, Villiers, Miss Arden, &c., left Edinburgh, while Bruce Norton and Gomersal, along with a several of the old company, and some additions from the Adelphi, went out to Pablo Fanque's Amphitheatre (now Newsome's Circus), where they opened for a short season, but apparently without much success.

We will now go back to the Adelphi, and trace its career under Wyndham from where we left off to the present period.

Wyndham did not allow his house to remain closed any longer than was just necessary for the execution of some repairs, and the improvement of the

lighting arrangements by adding a number of small gasaliers round the circle, and some lamps outside the Theatre. His opening night for the winter season was Saturday, November 6th 1852, when the *Hunchback* was played. Clifford = Powrie ; Julia = Miss Page, her first appearance here ; Helen = Miss Parker ; Modus = Wyndham ; Master Walter = Verner.

On Monday, November 8th, Mackay played Sir Pertinax Macsycophant in the *Man of the World*, and evidently made a great hit by the impersonation.*

Sims Reeves had been announced to appear on the 10th, and every box and stall had been taken in advance, but the great tenor, for the first time—although not the last—disappointed an Edinburgh audience. Wyndham published a bill (on the morning of the 10th) giving a full explanation, and stating that several telegraphic messages (luxuries in those days) had passed between himself and the eminent tenor. Notwithstanding the disappointment, the audience behaved handsomely to Wyndham, and kept their places, the house being crowded. The first piece was the *Daughter of the Regiment*, in which Miss Rebecca Isaacs gained enormous applause, and she was called before the curtain at the conclusion of the piece—an honour in those days, because it was only given when exceptional merit in the performance called for some special meed of praise to be awarded. Wyndham was called to the front, and thanked the audience for their kindness under the circumstances, and then *Rob Roy* was put on as the second piece. In this Powrie played “Rob ;” Mungall, the Dougal ; Wyndham, Rashleigh ; Webb, Owen ; Josephs, Major Galbraith ; Lyons, Captain Thornton ; Miss Isaacs, Diana ; Mrs Wyndham, Helen Macgregor, which apparently was the first time of her playing the part ; and Mackay again appeared as the Bailie.

On Monday, 15th November, *Romeo and Juliet*. Romeo = Powrie ; Juliet = Miss Page. This lady, who played lead, speedily became a great favourite.

On Monday, November 22nd, the Misses Pyne, Borrani (bass), W. Harrison (tenor), and O. Summers, all appeared in *The Bohemian Girl* ; while during the week there were given *Maritana*, *Sonnambula*, *Crown Diamonds*, *The Barber of Seville*, &c.

The last night of the opera company was on December 4th. On the 6th Powrie took a benefit, previous to his leaving the city ; and on the

* This was not (as then stated) the first time of his playing the part.

following evening Davenport and Miss Vining returned to the Adelphi, and performed together in several "legitimate" pieces during the week that followed. Miss Pyne and company returned again for a few evenings on December 21st, and on the 26th of that month the Christmas pantomime *The Ocean Queen* was produced. The scenery, by Channing, Selwin, and Sam Bough, was remarkably fine; but the production as a whole seems scarcely to have been so interesting or amusing as the pantomime at the other house. Harlequin = M. St Ody; Columbine = Miss M. Butler; Harlequina = Miss Weiss; Pantaloon = Carroll; Clown = Paul Pietro. The spring trap through which sprites are shot up from underneath the stage seems to have been used for the first time in Edinburgh during this pantomime.

During the run of the pantomime Powrie returned to the Adelphi.

On January 25th 1853, Mackay played the Bailie, with more animation, it is said, than he had done for some time, and with all the fascination of his younger years. At the close of the performance he was rapturously called before the curtain, and, in acknowledgment, he returned his thanks to the audience for the "warm feeling they had always testified to their auld acquaintance, Bailie Nicol Jarvie." Next morning the bills announced *Redgauntlet*. Peter Peebles = Mackay; but at night the audience were told that, in consequence of a sudden and severe indisposition, the veteran actor could not appear. He never acted again. Mackay's career has already been pretty fully chronicled in these pages. His importance in the company it is difficult to over estimate, for in many respects he was as intimately associated with the history of the Edinburgh, and, indeed, of the Scottish stage, as was Murray himself. Without his aid it is almost questionable whether the Waverley dramas would ever have taken the important place they did in the fortunes of the Theatre Royal, and there is no doubt that his impersonations of such parts as the Bailie, Peter Peebles, Meg Dodds, Jock Howieson, and many others, were never surpassed, if, indeed, they were ever equalled. His acting in other than his Scottish parts has been differently estimated, but although perhaps not a great actor out of his special line, he was at any rate a good all round useful man. In private life he was quiet, well conducted, and honourable in all his doings. He left a son, Hector, who went on the stage, and subsequently took up his abode in America. Mackay never recovered from the illness mentioned above, and died November 2nd 1857.*

* He was buried in the Calton Burying-ground.

On Friday 11th February, Sims Reeves, accompanied by Mrs Sims Reeves and Miss Julia Harland, appeared, playing Harry Bertram in *Guy Mannering*. This piece was followed by *Rob Roy* and *The Waterman* on the 12th, *La Sonnambula* and the *Beggars' Opera* on the 14th, and on the 15th (last night and benefit of Sims Reeves), selections from *The Bohemian Girl*, *Lucia*, *The Waterman*, and *Midas*.

Webb took his benefit on the 17th, when a drama entitled *Simon Lee ; or, the Murder of the Five Field Copse*, was produced.

On the following day Webb was entertained to dinner in the Regent Hotel by his fellow-actors, and presented with a massive gold ring by Wyndham, who was in the chair. He appeared on the same evening for the last time as a member of the stock company. Webb, who as an actor was able to combine rare pathos and even passion with his low comedy,* left Edinburgh to join the Dublin company as principal low comedian. During the following year he became manager of the Dublin Theatre, but eventually gave it up, after which he confined himself to touring with his brother Charles in such pieces as the *Comedy of Errors*, in which their likeness to one another served them in good stead. Webb died in 1867, and is now comparatively forgotten ; a fate that should not have been his, for as an actor, in his own line, he had few equals.

On the 19th the Miss Pyne and W. Harrison company again appeared. On the 12th of March Miss Rebecca Isaacs, who had been playing to very bad houses for some weeks, took her benefit. On Monday, March 14th, Gourlay played Bauldy in *The Gentle Shepherd*, and on the following evenings in several of his favourite characters.

Mrs Stirling commenced a brief engagement on March 21st, appearing in her inimitable impersonation of Peg Woffington in *Masks and Faces*. Triplet = Gourlay ; Mabel Vane = Miss Page. *Masks and Faces* was again played on the 21st, 22nd, 23rd, and 24th, and on the 26th for Mrs Stirling's benefit.

Sam Cowell appeared on the 26th, singing "Robinson Crusoe," "Billy Barlow," and other of his inimitable songs during the week. At this time Miss Bufton, the dancer, and Miss Cruise, both from the Royal, joined Wyndham's company.

The house was closed from Wednesday, April 20th, to Tuesday, 26th, on account of the Fast-day. It reopened on the latter date with

* It should be remembered that Webb preceded Robson, Belmore, Anson, and Toole in this line.

Phelps as Sir Pertinax in the *Man of the World*, and he took his benefit on May 7th, again playing Sir Pertinax, and Justice Shallow in *Henry IV*.

On May 18th Gourlay, who had been starring since March, took his benefit, playing in the *Heart of Midlothian*.

On the evening of May 24th, at about a quarter to five, a workman in the Theatre observed flames issuing from one of the lower private boxes next the stage, and immediately gave the alarm. In an hour's time, however, the building was in ruins. The fire seems to have originated in the musicians' room, where gas was burned all day. Four days previous to the fire Mrs Wyndham (the manager's house was above the Theatre) had given birth to a son,* and had to be carried to a place of safety.

This, the first burning of a Theatre in Edinburgh, was not altogether an unmixed evil, for the Theatre, as it then stood, with the stage where the auditorium is now situated, was highly inconvenient, not to say dangerous. If the fire had occurred at night when the house was full, it would have been impossible for more than a very few to have escaped, the passages being not only long, but narrow. The building was so unsuitable, in fact, that the proprietors had considered as to the expediency of pulling it down and rebuilding, when the fire saved them the trouble of making up their minds.

* F. W. Wyndham, now co-proprietor and manager of the Royal Lyceum, Edinburgh.

CHAPTER XXIII.

LAST YEARS OF THE ROYAL.



T was fortunate for Wyndham that the Theatre Royal was standing vacant and ready for his occupation at the time when the Adelphi was burned. He entered immediately into possession, and his first bill there reads as follows :—" The public are respectfully informed that the THEATRE ROYAL will open for the summer season on Saturday first, June 11th 1853, under the management of Mr and Mrs Wyndham."

The first piece was *Simpson & Co.* Charles Bromley = Wyndham ; Peter Simpson = Anthony Younge ; Mrs Peter Simpson = Mrs Wyndham, her first appearance since her severe indisposition.

Wyndham announced himself as both acting and stage manager ; Smith was deputy stage director and prompter ; Channing, scenic artist ; R. B. Stewart, musical director.

On June 27th, *Rivals*. Captain Absolute = Wyndham ; Sir Anthony Absolute = A. Younge ; Sir Lucius O'Trigger = Josephs ; Acres = Gourlay ; Fag = E. D. Lyons ; David = Mungall ; Mrs Malaprop = Miss Nicol ; Julia = Miss Page ; Lydia = Miss Maria Stanley ; Lucy = Miss Julia James.*

On July 9th one of the most interesting first appearances recorded in this volume took place. It was that of John Lawrence Toole, who is still (and may he long continue to be), one of the brightest, most genial, and warmest hearted members of the profession.

The bills were headed, " First appearance of the popular comedian, Mr J. L. Toole, from the Queen's Royal Theatre, Dublin." He had arrived on the same day in Edinburgh, and after attending rehearsal,

* Afterwards married Hill.

he repaired to his lodgings tired and weary, and went to bed to get a little rest, leaving, however, strict injunctions as to when he was to be called. His landlady forgot all about him until the arrival of the call boy from the Theatre to inquire where he was. There was just time to put on his clothes and rush up to the Theatre, there to dress and hasten on to the stage. In his hurry on entering he tripped his foot and almost fell head first, a circumstance that caused a loud peal of laughter, and made him feel nervous during the whole performance. The part he played was Hector Timid in the farce of *Dead Shot*, and, fearful of the notice he would get in the papers next day, what was the new low comedian's surprise to find that the critics were unanimous in pointing out how appropriate to the character was the nervous manner and faltering gait that he had exhibited, and specially complimented him on his happy method of making his entrance on the stage.

August 16th saw the first appearance of Miss Featherstone; and on the 27th Toole "chaunted the melancholic historie of Villikins and his Dinah" for the first time. September 7th, "farewell benefit of E. D. Lyons, prior to his departure for the Royal Surrey Theatre."

On September 12th Charles Mathews appeared; and on the 19th what was perhaps the very first pioneer of the present travelling company system visited Edinburgh. This was the Haymarket company, who announced themselves as follows:—"First appearance of the following ladies and gentlemen of the Haymarket Company:—Messrs Howe, Lambert, Rogers, C. Selby, Braid, Edwards, Ellis, Mrs Seymour, Mrs L. S. Buckingham, Mrs Stanley, Mrs Horn, Miss E. Woulds, Miss Carroll, and Mrs Clark.

Toole took a benefit on September 29th, when he brought out a new piece by Thomas and J. M. Morton, entitled *Words on the Wall*. On October 24th the season ended with Mr and Mrs Wyndham's benefit.

The winter season opened on November 12th 1853. Lambert (late of the Haymarket Company) was engaged as stage manager, Alexander Mackenzie was retained as musical director, and Messrs B. Tannett and W. Wilson were the scenic artists.

On November 19th *The Lady of Lyons* was performed, when Wyndham played Claude Melnotte, "his second appearance in that part." The other characters were distributed as follows:—Glavis = Toole; General Damas = Lambert; Second Officer = Hill; Pauline = Miss Page; Madame Deschappelles = Miss Nicol; Widow Melnotte = Mrs Newton.

On December 10th the play of *Lord Darnley* was performed, with Wyndham as Henry Darnley and Toole as Sandy M'Screw, a barber, which was probably the only Scottish part he ever appeared in, but which, be it noted, he did not play as a Scotsman. To get out of the difficulty he introduced a few lines explaining that, as he had not been long in Scotland, he would play in his usual way. Toole, in fact, save in burlesque, never played a Scottish part.

During an operatic season at the Royal, the company flitted to the Amphitheatre opposite to the Surgeons' Hall, and there produced the pantomime *Harlequin Dick Whittington*. The production does not seem to have been such a success as it deserved. This was probably owing to the intense cold in the building, which was only a wooden erection, with a roof so much out of repair, that on one occasion the snow fell on the audience during the performance. The company was glad to return to its comfortable quarters in the Royal about the end of January 1854.

On February 6th Toole played Tony in *She Stoops to Conquer*, and on March 7th *Oliver Twist* was played. Toole, as the Dodger, introduced for the first time a new song, written expressly for him, entitled "The Dodger's Lament." This was written by Hill, a member of the company.

It may be mentioned here that Edinburgh audiences were far more critical then than they are now, knew good acting when they saw it, and as a rule encouraged it both with applause and patronage. About Toole they made no mistake, and took to him at once; in fact, he had not been here many weeks when he became *the* favourite of the company. It is questionable, in fact, if any actor—even Mackay himself—was ever so much liked by an Edinburgh audience as Toole in his time, and for the matter of that is yet by the real playgoers of our city.

On the 18th of the same month Powrie made his first appearance for the season, and on the 25th a drama, written expressly for the Theatre Royal, Edinburgh, by G. W. Shands, and called *Whisky and Water* was produced, the plot of which had been suggested by Cruickshank's "Bottle." Toole played the part of Dicky Drudge, a pot boy, a character in which he is well remembered.

On April 1st, the "farewell engagement" of Miss Louisa Pyne and company was announced. Phelps made his first appearance at the Royal on the 10th, playing Werner in the play of the same name. Miss Nicol

took her benefit on April 24th, being the last night of playing until May 1st.

When the Theatre reopened (May 1st) the play of *Sylvester Daggerwood* was produced, with Toole in the character of Sylvester, in which he gave imitations of Charles Kean, Buckstone, Harley, Wright, Paul Bedford, T. P. Cooke, &c.

On May 17th Powrie took his benefit, and played Richelieu for the first time.

On the following evening (May 18th) Toole, who was engaged to go to the St James' Theatre, London, under Mrs Seymour's management, took a farewell benefit, with the following programme :—The nautical drama of *Tom Cringle*. Tom Cringle = Wyndham ; Gipsy Jack = Toole. To be followed by an entirely new and original burlesque (written expressly for this occasion), founded on the celebrated ballad, entitled *The Loves of Willikind and his Dinah ; or, the Cup of Cowld Pizon*. Sir Kohinoor Quisby, a rich merchant and the cruel "parient" = Barry ; Sir Claribel, the intended husband = Courtney ; The Worshipful Ledger de Ludgate = C. James ; Young Master Willikind, clerk to aforesaid = J. L. Toole ; Slip and Fetch, a pretty page = Miss M. Newton ; The Fair Mistress Dinah, just sixteen years old, and looks it = Miss Nicol ; Chorus = Hill, who was also the author of this amusing little piece.

After Willikind, Toole appeared as Master Dobbs,* and sang, for the first time, a new and original song called "He, She, and the Postman," after which was played *Boots at the Swan*. in which Toole was Jacob Earwig, and the whole concluded with the first act of *Oliver Twist*.

May 22nd, the last night of the season, being for the benefit of Mr and Mrs Wyndham, *Rob Roy* was performed, with George Webster as the Bailie.

When the Royal opened for the summer season on June 17th 1854, Arthur Woods, from Manchester, joined as principal low comedian in place of Toole, who had gone to London, where he opened at the St James', October 2nd 1854, as Sam Pepys in *The King's Rival*. Woods was a quaint, dry actor of considerable ability. A few other new hands were engaged, but the company remained pretty much the same as during

* The part of Master Dobbs is from the farce of the *Omnibus*, originally written for Power, the Irish comedian. Dobbs is not the principal part, but somehow Toole contrived to make it much funnier than any other in the piece ; it was a most ludicrous picture of a spoilt, childish, over-grown lout.

the winter. Lambert, besides playing old men admirably, was again stage manager; and Mackenzie, musical director.

A piece entitled *The Sea of Ice*, with very elaborate effects, which opened the season, ran some ten nights; on July 1st, was performed *Masks and Faces*, with Mrs Seymour as Peg Woffington.

On August 14th Charles Reade's drama *The Courier of Lyons* was played for the first time in Edinburgh.

For September 1st was announced the benefit and last appearance of H. Saker, who, it may be mentioned, was going to fill an engagement at the Princess' Theatre, London. It was not his last appearance, however. The piece presented was a new comedy by Ebsworth, and played for the first time on any stage. It was called *£150,000!* The cast was—Captain Fitzherbert = Arthur Stirling; Lieutenant Briggs = B. Bowler; Major Moubray = Kelsey; Colonel Dynewell = C. Lloyds; Sparkle = Arthur Wood; Gripe = Danvers; Catch = Patrick; Lady Charlotte Playful = Mrs Mortimer; The Hon. Mrs Falconer = Miss Nicol; Grace Falconer = Miss Page.

Mungall had a farewell benefit on September 15th, previous to his departure for Australia, when *Rob Roy* was played. Rob Roy = Powrie; Bailie Nicol Jarvie = G. Webster; Rashleigh = Wyndham; Francis = B. Bowler; Major Galbraith = H. Saker; Dougal = Mungall; Andrew Fair-service = Danvers; Helen = Mrs Wyndham; Diana Vernon = Mrs Mortimer.

The summer season closed on October 24th.

The winter season (1854-5) opened on November 4th.

On December 20th, after the play *The Iron Chest*, the pantomime *Harlequin and the Three Bears* was produced. It was written by J. B. Buckstone, "with a few occasional sparks from the pen of the author of *Harlequin Whittington*." The scenery was by B. Tannett, and it may be mentioned that the transformation scene which was introduced was probably the first ever seen in Edinburgh.

On March 3rd, *Hamlet*. Hamlet = George Melville, from the Theatres Royal, Bath and Bristol, his first appearance here.

On the 5th, Wright, the comedian, made his first appearance here, playing Paul Pry. On the same evening the *Cricket on the Hearth* was played, with Wright as Tilly Slowboy, Miss Helen Bennett as Dot, and W. Cooper as Caleb Plummer. William Cooper, who on this occasion appeared in the part since rendered immortal—if the expression may be

allowed—by Toole, had accompanied that first of low comedians to London to fill the old men parts, which he did admirably, at the St James'. That establishment, however, did not prove a success, so Cooper and Toole gravitated back to their old quarters with Wyndham.

On March 19th, Miss Charlotte Cushman played Romeo to the Juliet of Miss M. A. Bellair, Miss Nicol being the Nurse, and Wyndham the Mercutio.

On the 26th Toole again appeared, it being his first appearance since being in London. He evidently intended only to pay a flying visit to Edinburgh, for on April 25th his benefit and the last night of his engagement was announced. An entirely new drama entitled *Jack and Jack's Brother*, was played on this occasion. It was by J. B. Johnstone, and the character of "Joe the Orphan," which Toole then created, afterwards became one of his most popular parts. The song of "The Pathetic Love of the Maid of Westminster," otherwise known as the "Ratcatcher's Daughter," was introduced and sung for the first time in Edinburgh. The other parts in the drama were cast as follows :—Christopher Cable = Cooper ; Luke Hatfield = Harald ; Abel Allnut = F. Carter. Although this was announced as his last performance, Toole did not leave ; perhaps it was one of his little jokes !

On May 28th Hector Mackay, son of the famous Mackay, made his first professional appearance in Edinburgh, playing his father's great part of the Bailie. Young Mackay seems to have been far from bad as an actor ; he afterwards became a pantomimist (pantaloön), and went to America.

On the same evening *Done on Both Sides* was played for the first time here. Mr Whiffles = W. Cooper ; Mr John Brownjohn = Wyndham ; Mr Phibbes = J. L. Toole ; Mrs Whiffles = Miss Nicol ; Lydia = Miss Anstey.

The last night of the season was on June 11th, being for Mr and Mrs Wyndham's benefit ; the *Rent Day* being played, along with, for the first time in Edinburgh, *The Bould Soger Boy*. Miss Judy M'Cann = Wyndham ; Prettyman = Toole.

The summer season 1855 opened on June 27th with *The Battle of Alma* (by arrangement with Edmund Glover). The hour of commencement was eight o'clock, and the prices were reduced. Boxes were now 2s. 6d. ; pit, 1s. 6d. (second price at 9.30, 1s.) ; galleries, 1s. and 6d. ; private boxes, 21s. and 15s.

In *The Battle of Alma* there were 30 new scenes, and 2 new grand moving panoramas, 3 military bands were employed, there were 50 actors and actresses in the company, and 200 auxiliaries were specially engaged. At such prices it is certainly difficult to see how it can have paid. Mrs Wyndham took the part of Alice M'Allister; Mrs Atkins, the Highland Widow; Edmund Glover, Harry Bluff; and J. L. Toole, Dicky Roll, a drummer. On July 11th, first appearance in Scotland of Creswick, when *Macbeth* was played.

During the season Wyndham, with a praiseworthy determination to outstrip, if possible, the best traditions of the Edinburgh Theatre, set about the revival of Shakspeare's *Henry VIII.* upon a scale of completeness that had never been surpassed, and perhaps only equalled by Charles Kean at the Princess', London. It took several months in the preparation, but when completed it at once proved worth the labour, thought, and expense.

The first performance was on October 2nd, the cast being as follows:—Henry VIII. = Harald; Cardinal Wolsey = (alternate nights) Powrie and George Melville; Cardinal Campeius = Foote; Capucius = Douglas; Cranmer = Gordon; Duke of Norfolk = Fenton; Duke of Buckingham = (alternate nights) George Melville and Powrie; Duke of Suffolk = Vernon; Earl of Surrey = Wyndham; Gardiner = W. Cooper; Lord Sands = J. L. Toole; Cromwell = E. D. Lyons; Queen Katharine = Mrs Wyndham; Anne Bullen = Miss Wyatt; An Old Lady = Miss Nicol. A capital dance of shepherds, preceded by sixteen drummers and fifers, and the same number of torch-bearers, was introduced.

Toole's impersonation of Lord Sands was unsurpassable; the way in which the young actor transformed himself into the old tottering courtier with an imbecile giggle was an admirable study. Considering the prices charged—2s. 6d., 1s. 6d., 1s., and 6d.—it is extraordinary how the production can have paid, even with the crowded houses which it drew until the 24th of October, that being the last night.

Mr and Mrs Leigh Murray appeared on October 30th, and acted for several nights; and the summer season came to a close on November 17th, with the usual benefit to Mr and Mrs Wyndham.

An extra opera season opened on November 19th. On the 26th *Rob Roy* was played with the following cast:—Rob Roy = Harald; Diana Vernon = Madame Weiss; Bailie Nicol Jarvie = Fisher; Dougal = Douglas; Major Galbraith = Weiss; Francis = Sims Reeves. It is worth

noting that August Manns, the renowned orchestral conductor, was connected with the orchestra that travelled with this opera company.*

The winter season of 1855-6 opened on November 28th. On December 3rd *The Midsummer Night's Dream* was brought out on the same scale of completeness and splendour as *Henry VIII.* Wyndham said on the bills that he "avails himself of this opportunity to acknowledge the courtesy of Samuel Phelps, Esq., of the Theatre Royal, Sadler's Wells, who has in the kindest manner favoured him with his valuable advice and assistance in the production of the play."

The scenery was again by B. Tannett, and the properties by Henry, of Sadler's Wells Theatre. The cast was as follows:—Theseus = Harald; Egeus = Carter; Lysander = Wyndham; Demetrius = E. D. Lyons; Quince = W. Cooper; Snug = Douglas; Snout, a tinker = Danvers; Bottom, a weaver = J. L. Toole; Flute, a bellows mender = Fisher; Hippolyta = Mrs E. D. Lyons; Hermia = Miss Wyatt; Helena = Mrs Wyndham; Oberon = Miss Maria Simpson; Titania = Miss C. Brock; Puck = Miss H. Bennett. It deservedly proved almost as great a success as *Henry VIII.*, and was only withdrawn on December 20th, to allow of the pantomime *Jack and the Beanstalk* being produced.

What was announced as the "third season of grand opera" commenced on January 21st 1856, with a performance of *Il Trovatore*. Opera was given on the Mondays, Tuesdays, Thursdays, and Fridays of each week, the stage being occupied on the other two evenings of the week by the dramatic company. The last evening of the opera company was on February 29th.

On March 3rd Miss Aitken, from the Theatre Royal Glasgow, made her first appearance, playing Julia in the *Hunchback* to Powrie's Sir Thomas Clifford. It is interesting to note that on March 15th Toole played Father Jean in the *Ragpicker of Paris* for the first time.

A splendid revival of *Macbeth* had been underlined in the bills for a considerable time, and on Monday, 17th March, was produced with complete success. Powrie and Edmund Glover alternated the parts of Macbeth and Macduff, the other parts being cast as follows:—Banquo = Harald; Rosse = Wyndham; Fleance = Miss S. Davis; Witches = W. Cooper, J. L. Toole, and Fisher; Hecate = T. Lyons, from the Theatre Royal, Liverpool, his first appearance here; Singing Witches = Misses H.

* Grove's Dictionary of Music and Musicians.

Bennett, Nicol, Anstey, and M. Davis ; Lady Macbeth = Mrs Wyndham ; Lady Macduff = Miss Wyatt ; Gentlewoman = Mrs Atkins.

Toole's impersonation of the Second Witch is said to have been extremely grotesque. The version of this play used was Shakspeare's text, with almost no alterations except the excision of the anti-climax to the play, and the retention of the Middleton and Locke interpolations.

Macbeth did not run nearly so long as either *Henry VIII.* or *Midsummer Night's Dream*, and was replaced the following week by a return visit of the Italian Opera Company.

On April 15th Toole took his benefit, when was played *Jonathan Bradford*, in which he sustained the part of Caleb Scrummade, and sang the "Ratcatcher's Daughter;" after which *Toole's Appeal to the Public*. Felix Rosemary = Toole. This was followed by Toole singing a "favourite song;" after which *No. 1 Round the Corner*; the whole to conclude with the drama of *Toodles*, in which Toole played Mr Timothy Toodles.

The last night of the season was on April 21st, when Mr and Mrs Wyndham took their customary benefit.

The summer season for 1856 opened on May 3rd. On August 25th the "Farewell nights of the popular comedian, Mr J. L. Toole," headed the bills in bold type; immediately underneath being an intimation of Fisher's last week, "previous to his departure to America."

Toole's farewell benefit was on the evening of August 29th, when he respectfully announced that, "having been engaged at the Lyceum, London, he trusts that the great and highly flattering patronage always accorded to him will be extended again on this occasion." The performance commenced with *Paul Pry*, in which Toole "hoped he didn't intrude" for the first time in Edinburgh. He then appeared as the "Yankee Gal," and sang "Bobbing around Mary Anne," and "Polly won't you try me, oh!" after which he spoke a few farewell words to his friends. These were followed by the farce *Domestic Economy*, in which he played John Grumley; the play scene from *Midsummer Night's Dream* was then given, with Toole as Bottom; the whole concluding with *Your Life's in Danger*. John Strong, first time in Edinburgh = Toole. "Tickets to be had of Mr J. L. Toole, 23 Union Place"

A notable first appearance was that of Mr and Mrs Alfred Wigan, from the Olympic Theatre, London, on September 15th, when they played as John Mildmay and Mrs Hector Sternhold in *Still Waters Run Deep*. The last night of the season was on October 22nd.

The Theatre only remained closed until November 1st, when it reopened for the winter season with *The Honeymoon*. The Duke = T. Mead; Rolando = Wyndham; Count Montalban = E. D. Lyons; Jaquez = Gomersal; Juliana = Mrs Wyndham; Volante = Miss Isabel Adams; Hostess = Miss Nicol, Gomersal, who made his first appearance here in 1852, had been engaged from the Theatre Royal, Manchester, to fill Toole's place; although a fairly humorous comedian, he never succeeded in making himself a favourite. A very good ballet corps, headed by the Misses Gunniss, was engaged this season.

The pantomime *Little Red Riding Hood* was produced on December 22nd.

The bill for Saturday, February 7th 1857, announced the "first appearance for eight years of the celebrated and popular tragedian, Barry Sullivan."

On Monday, February 9th, Barry Sullivan played Richelieu, the other parts being cast as follows:—The Chevalier de Mauprat = Wyndham; Baradas = Harald; Joseph = Harker; De Berringham = E. D. Lyons; Louis XIII. = Mowbray; Gaston, Duke of Orleans = Irving; Julie = Miss Jane Howard.

This was the first occasion on which Henry Irving appeared in Edinburgh. As is well enough known, he had made his first professional appearance at Sunderland on September 29th 1856, on which occasion he also played Gaston.

On February 19th, *Memorandums in the Red Book*, in which Irving played the Count de Cerney, and on the same evening he took Lieutenant Pike in the drama *Black-Eyed Susan*. On February 24th, *Rob Roy*, after which *The Corsican Brothers*; the twin brothers by Edmund Glover, and Baron Giordine = Irving.

Charles Verner commenced a starring engagement on February 26th, opening in *Richelieu*, in which Irving again played Gaston, and in the after piece of *The Pilot*, he took the part of Captain Manson.

On March 2nd Falconer's play of *The Cagot* was produced, Charles Verner as Raoul, the Cagot; and Irving in the small part of Antoine. Miss Helen Faucit opened a brief engagement on March 9th; and on the 16th Madame Celeste appeared, playing until the 28th. On her benefit night (27th) she played Harlequin in a few scenes of pantomime, Gomersal being Clown "for the first time, and this night only." This entertainment was received so well that it was repeated the following night, when Gomersal was again Clown "for this night only."

On May 13th, *Hamlet*; Horatio = Irving. May 16th, *Macbeth*; Banquo = Irving; Macduff = Charles Verner; Lady Macbeth = Mrs Wyndham; and on the same evening, *The King's Musketeers*, in which Irving played Athos. On May 21st, *Douglas*; Lord Randolph = Irving. On May 23rd, *Richard III.*; Catesby = Irving. On May 26th, for the benefit of Charles Verner, *The Cricket on the Hearth*; John Peerybingle = Verner, first time in Edinburgh; Caleb = Harker; after which *Teddy the Tiler*; Henry = Irving; the whole concluding with *The Rag Picker of Paris*; Father Jean = Verner, first time here; Comte St Fruilan = Irving.

The season closed on June 1st with Mr and Mrs Wyndham's benefit.

Five days afterwards (June 6th) the summer season opened, when Sir William Don appeared in three pieces—Montague Spicer, in *Life's Trial*; Bob Ticket, in *An Alarming Sacrifice*; and Dandie Dinmont, in *Guy Mannering*.

During the month of June Toole and Miss Louise Keeley both appeared. The cast of Brough's burlesque of *Perdita*, on July 21st, is worth noting:—Leontes = W. Gomersal; Polixenes = Josephs; Florizel = Miss Louise Keeley; Autolycus = J. L. Toole; Camillo = Irving; Hermione = Miss Nicol; Perdita = Miss Foote; Paulina = Mrs Atkins. July 27th, benefit of Miss L. Keeley, *Paul Pry*. Paul Pry = J. L. Toole; Harry Stanley = Irving. August 14th, *London Assurance*. Dazzle = Irving; Mark Meddle = Sir W. Don; Adolphus Spanker = J. L. Toole; Grace Harkaway = Miss L. Keeley. On October 7th Alexander Mackenzie, the talented leader of the orchestra, died, and on the following evening Wyndham addressed a few sentences on the subject to the audience. The season terminated on November 18th with the usual benefit to Mr and Mrs Wyndham.

Nothing falls to be recorded during the progress of the following winter season (1857-8) until December 31st, when the pantomime *Little Bo-Peep* was produced. In this Irving played the part of "Scruncher," Captain of the Wolves; Miss Foote was Little Bo-Peep. In the Harlequinade the part of Clown was taken by Joel Benedict, who at Vauxhall in 1844 had appeared as "Joel il Diavolo." In 1852 he was acting manager to Charles Dillon, and he died April 3rd 1887.*

The season closed early in March, and the house opened on April

* *Era*.

28th 1858 for the summer season, when Miss E. Webb and J. L. Toole were both engaged as stars, and Miss Sophie Miles, from Manchester, made her first appearance.

On June 7th was brought out James Ballantine's "new Scottish drama," *The Gaberlunzie Man*. The Gaberlunzie = George Webster; William Nairn = Ersser Jones; Walter Hepburn = Douglas; Walter Blackburn = Foote; Henri Chamfleur = E. D. Lyons; Sir George Warrender = Wallace; Peter Pinglepenny = Fisher; Organist = Irving; Tam = W. Gomersal; Jack Mizzen = Leffler; Matty Hepburn = Miss Nicol; Mary Melville = Miss M. Davis; Lady Warrender = Mrs E. D. Lyons; Phemie Blackburn = Miss C. Lucette.

This piece possessed qualities which should have insured it a much more lasting popularity than it ever attained to. The characters are sketched with an able hand, while the lyrics with which it is studded are of acknowledged beauty. On its first production it only ran six nights.

On June 23rd the performance was honoured with the presence and patronage of the Duke of Atholl, Grand Master Mason of Scotland, when Wyndham delivered an address, specially written for the occasion by Brother Ballantine. On August 6th Toole, who had been acting since the commencement of the season, took a benefit, and he made his last appearance the following evening. The season concluded with Mr and Mrs Wyndham's benefit on October 25th.

The first important production of the winter season of 1858-9—the last season of the old Royal—was the pantomime *The Sleeping Beauty*, produced December 27th. Irving appeared as Venoma, the spiteful fairy, of which performance the *Scotsman* remarked that "Mr Irving as Venoma was a model of a disagreeable and spiteful genius." F. Lawrie was the Clown.

Charles Dillon appeared on March 7th as Louis XI. Ersser Jones played François de Paule; Irving, Coitier; and Miss Sophie Miles, Marie.

March 8th, *Hamlet*. Hamlet = Dillon; Claudius = Irving; Polonius = Ersser Jones; First Gravedigger = George Smythson; Ghost = Wyndham; Ophelia = Miss Sophie Miles.

March 14th, *Rob Roy*. Rob Roy = George Melville; Bailie Nicol Jarvie = Fisher; Rashleigh = Irving. March 19th, *Richard III.*; Gloster = George Melville; King Henry IV. = Irving; *Mary Queen of Scots*; Jasper Dryfesdale = Irving; concluding with *The Lady of the Lake*; Malcolm Græme = Irving.

April 13th, for the benefit of Miss Nicol, *The Rivals*. Captain Absolute = Wyndham ; Falkland = George Melville ; Bob Acres = George Smythson ; Fag = Irving ; Mrs Malaprop = Miss Nicol.

May 2nd, benefit of Irving, *Ladies' Battle*. Le Baron = Ersser Jones ; Henri = E. D. Lyons ; Gustave = Irving ; after which *The Review*. To conclude with, for the first time in Edinburgh, *A Poor Girl's Temptation*. Walter Warren = Irving.

May 9th, benefit of Mr and Mrs Wyndham, *School for Scandal*. Careless = Irving ; Charles Surface = Wyndham ; Lady Teazle = Mrs Wyndham. To be followed by a "fanciful, flitting, moving, removing, valedictory sketch, *Please Copy the Address*, written expressly for the closing nights of the Theatre Royal, Edinburgh, by E. L. Blanchard." Mr Wyndham, by himself ; Spirit of the Past = Miss Nicol ; Spirit of the Future = Miss M. Davis ; Mrs Wyndham, by herself.

May 21st, *Macbeth*. Macbeth = George Melville ; Banquo = Wyndham ; Macduff = Irving.

May 23rd, *Rob Roy* and *The Pilot*. The Pilot = Irving.

We now have to chronicle the last night of the old house (May 25th 1859). Impressed with a sense of the interest attaching to the occasion, a committee of gentlemen, friends of the drama, undertook to make arrangements for imparting to the performance a marked and interesting character, with a view to recall and perpetuate, as far as possible, the many historical recollections connected with the history of the Scottish Stage which were inseparable from the building. The committee were also anxious to show the estimation in which the playgoing public held the exertions of Mr and Mrs Wyndham for their entertainment. In both respects they were completely successful, and any who were present on that memorable evening, and who are still alive to bear witness to the fact, will attest that the occasion was one that could not easily be forgotten.

The house was crowded in every part; the boxes containing the very best of the Edinburgh notables. The programme has been reproduced in fac simile for the present work. A pamphlet containing a sketch of the history of the Theatre was written for the occasion by Chambers, and distributed in the house. The address delivered by Wyndham was as follows :—

"Whate'er we do, howe'er our parts are cast,
Tis ever sad to say,—this is the last.

THEATRE-ROYAL EDINR.

SOLE LESSEE, R. H. WYNHAM, 95 PRINCES STREET.

FINAL CLOSING

OF THE THEATRE-ROYAL.

To-Night, 25th May 1859.

The Public is respectfully informed that a Committee of Gentlemen, Friends of the Drama, have kindly undertaken to make arrangements for imparting to the performance of This Evening a marked and interesting character, with a view to recall and perpetuate, as far as possible, the many delightful recollections connected with the history of the Scottish Stage, which are inseparable from the Building; and for the purpose of showing, as the Committee have been kind enough to say, "the respect they entertain for Mr and Mrs WYNHAM, and their high approval of the manner in which the theatrical amusements of Edinburgh have been conducted under their management."

The Box Plan will be exhibited at Mr WOOD'S ROOMS; 40 George Street, where applications for Seats must be made.
BOXES AND STALLS. 5s: PIT, 2s: LOWER GALLERY. 1s: UPPER GALLERY. 6d.

The Performances will commence with the Favourite Comedy, Written by TOM TATLER and GEORGE READE, Esq., entitled

MASKS & FACES

Sir Charles Pemander by Mr WYNHAM.

Triplet by Mr EDMUND GLOVER, Lessee of the Theatre-Royal and Princess' Theatre, Glasgow, who has expressed a desire to appear on this occasion.

Ernest Vane by Mr F. D. LYONS—Colley Cibber by Mr FOOTE—Quin by Mr ERSER JONES—Samrl by Mr FISHER.

Call Boy by Mr R. SAKER—Lysimachus Triplet by Master JONES—Pompey by Master THOMPSON.

Scoper by Mr IRVING—Hundson by Mr VANDENBOFF—Olender by Mr WALLACE—Burdock by Mr CARROLL.

Peg Woffington by Mrs WYNHAM.

Kitty Clive by Miss M. DAVIS—Mrs Triplet by Mrs E. JONES—Rosolino by Miss M. FOOTE—Maid by Miss THOMPSON.

Mabel Vane by Miss SOPHIE MILES.

Mr WYNHAM will deliver

A FAREWELL ADDRESS

To be followed by the Laughable Farce of

HIS LAST LEGS

Mr Felix O'Callaghan, a Man of Genius in his Last Legs, by Mr WYNHAM.

Charles by Mr IRVING—Mr Rivers by Mr ERSER JONES—Dr Banks by Mr FOOTE—John by Mr R. SAKER—Thomas by Mr DAVIS.

Mrs Montague by Miss NICOL—Julia by Miss JONES—Mrs Banks by Mrs E. JONES—Betty by Miss S. DAVIS.

After which the National Drama of

CRAMOND BRIG

James, King of Scotland, by Mr GEORGE MELVILLE.

Jock Howison by Mr FISHER—Banks of that ilk by Mr T. ROGERSON—Murdoch by Mr WALLACE—Officer by Mr ROMER.

Grimes by Mr GOUGLAS—Tam Macneil by Mr DAVIS—Page by Miss S. DAVIS.

Tibbie Howison by Miss NICOL—Marian by Miss M. DAVIS, in which Character she will Sing the Incidental Song of

"A KISS AHINT THE DOOR."

To conclude with a Moving and Re-Moving

VALEDICTORY SKETCH

Mr Wyndham by HIMSELF.

Spirit of the Past by Miss NICOL—Spirit of the Future by Miss M. DAVIS.

Mrs Wyndham by HERSELF.

The Music selected and arranged by Mr WM. HOWARD.

The Scenery by Mr J. GATES—The Mechanical Arrangements by Mr J. GLEN.

A new Patent Safety Envelope, modelled expressly for the occasion, by Mr PATTERSON.

SCENE. STAGE OF THE THEATRE-ROYAL.

Tableau 1. Meeting of Bailie Nicol Jarvie and Rob Roy in the Glasgow Tolbooth.

TABLEAU 2. FOREST of FONTAINBLEAU.

Deadly Encounter between Louis de Franchi and Chateau Renaud.

TABLEAU 3. PALACE AT BRIDEWELL.

Interview of Cardinal Wolsey with Queen Katherine, surrounded by her Maids of Honour.

TABLEAU 4. PANTOMIMIC COMBINATION.

The whole of the Performances terminating with

THE NATIONAL ANTHEM!

BY THE ENTIRE STRENGTH OF THE COMPANY.

REID, Printer, Nottingham Place, Edinburgh.

This is the last, this night we take farewell
 Of the Old House endeared by fancy's spell,
 Where Memory sees thro' long departed years
 A train of joys and sorrows, smiles and tears :
 Tears with no bitter taste, and sorrows sweet
 As summer showers, where rain and sunshine meet.

“ Here—and for one brief moment let me view
 Those pleasant bygone years as one of You,—
 Here, long ago, the grandsire, once a boy,
 Felt his first raptures of dramatic joy,
 And hailed returning with revolving time
 The marvels of the Christmas Pantomime.
 Here the staid Matron, then a maiden shy,
 First heard from Romeo's breast the lover's sigh ;
 By Juliet's lips first heard the love expressed,
 That since has made her heart and household blest.
 The Melodrama taught us here to glow
 With hate for wrong, and sympathy for woe ;
 Till the broad Farce soon dried the tear we shed,
 And sent us tired with laughing home to bed.

“ How many thoughts, how many names unite
 To cast upon these walls a glorious light !
 Siddons and Kemble here displayed their art,
 Potent as Nature's self to sway the heart ;
 Here shewed those matchless powers that seemed designed
 To fathom all the depths of Shakspeare's mind,
 And bring up beauties to our wondering view
 Such as the plodding critic never knew.
 We witnessed here O'Neill's expanding youth
 In all a woman's tenderness and truth ;
 And here by fate no further doomed to roam,
 The younger Siddons found a lifelong home.
 Stephens' sweet strains have left their echo here,
 And Braham's full trumpet-tone yet fills the ear.
 Nor lacked the Comic Muse her mirthful train :
 Liston's rich humour, Mathews' graphic vein ;
 York sent us Emery, and Erin's Isle
 Gave Johnstone's blindest brogue and brightest smile.
 Jones, Russell, Mason, Terry, rise to view—
 Terry, the Actor and the Author too ;
 Murray, with varied powers, himself a host,
 And he, the Bailie, our peculiar boast :
 While, scattered round, a galaxy of wit,
 Scott, Jeffrey, Wilson, formed an audience fit !—

O days of bygone glory, tell me when
We e'er shall look upon your like again ?

“ And where are those who such delight could give ?
Dead—or dispersed afar, if any live !
Save that Miss Nicol, her companions flown,
Like the last rose of Summer, blooms alone !

“ This classic ground thus hallowed by the past,
To other uses is resigned at last.
Our door is *chalked*—there's notice given to quit—
To-day's the *term*—to-morrow we must *flit*.
Soon as the present lessening hour is o'er,
The curtain falls that here will rise no more.

“ Another home the Drama soon will find,
Though casting oft a lingering look behind.
There be it still her effort and her pride
To range her forces upon Virtue's side ;
To make us in her magic mirror see
Both what we are, and what we ought to be ;
With gentle tears, evoked by mimic woe,
To purify the heart from which they flow ;
And while she mocks the follies of the day,
To temper Mirth with Reason's sober ray,
Pleasingly wise and innocently gay.
With arts like these your smiles she still may claim,
And almost emulate her former fame.

“ 'Tis thus alone your favour I would seek,
And shew the gratitude I cannot speak.
Still as I strove your kindness to secure,
My aim has been to keep your pleasures pure ;
And let me hope, in all I yet have done,
The Stage has found me no degenerate son :
While I may welcome in this bright array
A happy omen for my future way.

“ Here then, to-night, we bid the Past adieu !
To-morrow to fresh fields and pastures new,
Where 'tis our treasured hope to meet once more—with You.”

As is well known, the Government had acquired the entire property of Shakspeare Square, with the intention of building the General Post Office, which now adorns the site. Considerable difficulty was experienced by the arbitrators between the Commissioners of Her Majesty's Works and the Trustees for the proprietors of the Theatre in determining the

price to be paid for the property. In a huge "blue book" that was published containing the details of the transaction, some curious information is to be found; most of it, however, is not of a nature to warrant insertion in the present work. At the time of the purchase of the building Wyndham was paying £1000 rent. The Crown offered £25,871, 10s. for the property, being £9000 less than it was estimated had been paid by the proprietors to Jackson's estate. The proprietors, on the other hand, wanted £49,600, in addition to 50 per cent. for the sale being a compulsory one, making in all nearly £75,000. The feu-duty paid was £10, and the insurance money at the time of closing £108. The actual sum accepted by the proprietors was £30,000, with interest from May 26th 1859 to time of paying. The entire space occupied by the building (without the portico) was 912 square yards.

CHAPTER XXIV.

THE QUEEN'S THEATRE AND OPERA HOUSE, AND MINOR THEATRES.



THE ruins of the Adelphi lay for a long time without any move being made to rebuild the Theatre. At length a new building was commenced, the design being by David Bryce. The stage and auditorium were placed in the positions which they still retain, thereby allowing much better means of egress. The new house was seated as follows:—Stalls, 150; pit, 350; boxes, 300; upper boxes and gallery, 1000. The stage was 58 feet long by 62 broad, and at the proscenium 32 feet.

The new Theatre was let to James Black, a merchant in Leith, who was a large shareholder in the building. Black had some years previous to this made himself conspicuous in local dramatic circles by carrying on and printing from time to time a correspondence with, in the first instance, W. H. Murray, the manager; and, in the second place, James Spence, W.S., secretary for the trustees of the Adelphi Theatre. The origin of the correspondence was the non-fulfilment, on Murray's part, of the terms of his lease of the Adelphi. It seems he was bound to play so many nights a year in that building, and for many seasons he had failed to do so. Spence, as secretary for the trustees and shareholders of the building, should have seen that Murray kept to his contract; but Black made out a pretty good case against both him and Murray and showed that Spence had deliberately "winked" at Murray's failure to implement his bargain. When Wyndham got the Adelphi, there was no cause for complaint of any kind, but Black seems all along to have nursed a secret belief that he could—if he got the chance—make a far better job of managing a Theatre than either Murray or Wyndham. When the Adelphi was rebuilt he *did* get a chance, and conclusively showed by his complete failure soon

after that something more is requisite for the successful management of a theatre than self-conceit and dilettantism.

Black's first season* (1855-6) opened on December 19th, with the "National Anthem," sung by Miss Cicely Nott and Miss Kate Saville, after which *Love's Sacrifice*. The entertainments of the evening included a violin solo by Master Charles Rossi.

On January 1st *Guy Mannering* was put upon the stage. Henry Bertram = W. H. Eburne; Dandie = Harker; Dominie = Cathcart; Gabriel = Josephs; Lucy = Miss Cicely Nott; Meg Merrilees = Mrs Moorhouse.

On January 14th the pantomime *Baron Munchausen* was produced. Clown = Charles Le Clercq; Harlequin = Arthur Le Clercq. An important production was Tom Taylor's *Still Waters Run Deep*, on January 23rd 1856, for the first time in Edinburgh. New scenery by William Channing. John Mildmay = T. Mead; Captain Hawksley = Moorhouse; Dunbilk = Collier; Mr Potter = Harker; Gimlet = Everett; Jessop = Parker; Mrs Mildmay = Miss Kate Saville; Mrs Hector Sternhold = Miss Cleaver. *Still Waters* ran for six nights in succession, and was frequently repeated during the season.

The season closed on April 22nd, and the house reopened for the summer on the 30th of the same month, with Buckstone's *King of the Alps*, for the first time in Edinburgh.

Mead took his first benefit at this house on May 19th, when he played Ingomar in the play of that name. Miss Aitken, from the Theatre Royal, Glasgow, made her appearance on June 16th, playing Juliet to Mead's Romeo. On July 7th was produced *Faust and Marguerite*. Mephistopheles = Mead; Faust = Moorhouse; Marguerite = Miss Kate Saville; Siebel = Lloyd, who was playing a sort of starring engagement. This piece was played eleven successive nights. On July 21st *Maritana* was produced by an opera company under the management of Henry Corri. The season came to a close on October 20th with a benefit to Black, the lessee.

The following winter season (1856-7) opened on November 5th. Mead was no longer a member of the company, his place having been taken by Swinbourne, who joined towards the close of the summer season (1856). Miss Marriott, from Drury Lane, appeared in a round of leading parts from November 24th to December 6th. Swinbourne left on

* The Theatre was now called "The Queen's Theatre and Opera House."

December 20th, and on the 22nd the pantomime *Puss in Boots* was brought out; the scenery by Channing and music by R. B. Stewart. Vandenhoff and his daughter paid a starring visit in January, extending into February. It was announced as Vandenhoff's farewell engagement in Edinburgh; but probably on account of the visit being a success, he gave another series of farewell appearances a few weeks after.

The season came to a close on April 18th 1857, with *Romeo and Juliet*. Mercutio = Mead (who had joined some time previously); Romeo = Warden; Juliet = Miss Kate Saville; Nurse = Miss Cleaver.

The house again opened on May 2nd 1857. On June 5th *Macbeth* was produced with great splendour. Macbeth = Mead; Macduff = F. Dewar; Banquo = Robert Tindell; Lady Macbeth = Miss Aitken. This production was only played three times, and no doubt Black lost money by it. On June 22nd Miss Cleaver took a farewell benefit before entering upon an engagement at the Theatre Royal, Glasgow. She played Lady Constance in *King John*. King John = Mead.

Black's venture had proved a failure, notwithstanding the excellent programmes and companies that he had provided. On June 26th 1857, he announced his farewell benefit, when *A Cure for the Heartache* and *The Jacobite* were played. So exit Black, a sadder, and perhaps a wiser, but certainly a poorer man than when he entered upon a task for which he proved himself unfitted.

The Government having determined to erect the General Post Office on the site of the Theatre Royal, it behoved Wyndham to be ready against the shortly to be expected warning to quit. The Queen's was the only place for him to turn to, and as it now stood empty, the proprietors were only too glad to get for their tenant the only one who had proved himself worthy to stand in Murray's shoes.

A lease having been granted, Wyndham opened "The Queen's Theatre and Opera House," on November 23rd 1857, with an occasional address by himself and Mrs Wyndham; *The Love Chase* following.

November 28th, *Othello*. Othello = Charles Verner; Iago = Tom Mead; Montano = Irving; Desdemona = Miss Henrietta Sims.

December 14th, *Rob Roy*. Rob = Verner; Bailie = Fisher; Rashleigh = Irving; Dougal = Gomersal; Francis = Henry Haigh.

The pantomime *St George and the Dragon* was brought out on December 21st.

February 26th, "for the benefit of Mr Vandenhoff, and his last appear-

ance in Edinburgh," *Henry VIII.* Wolsey = Vandenhoff; Earl of Surrey = Irving. "At the end of the play Mr Vandenhoff will have the honour of speaking a farewell address, when he will take his final leave of the Edinburgh stage."

On the 19th April the season concluded with Mr and Mrs Wyndham's benefit.

The summer season opened on June 23rd 1858, when no fewer than twenty-three new artistes made their first appearances. Powrie and Charles Verner each played for a few evenings, and the season closed with a benefit to A. Younge, the manager, on July 27th.

The winter season opened on November 6th 1858.

On December 4th Toole was announced to commence his "farewell engagement." There can scarcely be any doubt that this was one of his little jokes! He played Joe in the *Gipsy Farmer*, it being his first appearance at this Theatre. The part of Luke Hatfield = Irving. The pantomime this season was *Tam O'Shanter*, and after January 29th 1859 no dramatic performances were given in this house until the old Theatre Royal had closed its doors for ever, and the Patent had been transferred to the junior house.

The first season of the Queen's under Royal letters patent opened on June 25th 1859, when was played *Everybody's Friend*. Felix Featherley = Wyndham; Icebrook = George Fisher; Major Wellington De Boots = George Smythson; Mrs Featherley = Miss Sophie Miles; * Mrs Major De Boots = Miss Nicol.

During this season Irving played in a great variety of parts. Light comedy lead was his particular department, but he sustained many parts in burlesque, heavy lead, low comedy, and walking gentleman—a combination that Wyndham never again obtained in any single member of his company.

July 7th, *Heart of Midlothian*. John, Duke of Argyle = Irving. July 14th, *Charles XII.*, in which Irving sustained the title rôle. August 5th, Montague Williams, late of H.M. 41st Regiment, appeared along with "that distinguished London amateur," "Tom Pierce, Esq." (F. C. Burnand), on the occasion of Miss Louise Keeley's† benefit. The play was *London Assurance*. Charles Courtly = Montague Williams; Sir Harcourt Courtly = Ersser Jones; Dazzle = Irving; Adolphus Spanker =

* Afterwards married to George Fisher.

† Mrs Montague Williams.

E. D. Lyons ; Lady Gay Spanker = Mrs Wyndham ; Grace Harkaway = Miss Louise Keeley. After which was played the comedietta *Dearest Elizabeth*. Mr Lax = Tom Pierce, Esq. ; Betsy = Miss Louise Keeley.

August 6th, *Guy Mannering*. Dirk Hatterick = Irving. August 16th, *Kenilworth*, a comic operatic extravaganza, in which Miss Nicol played Queen Elizabeth and Irving, Wayland Smith. August 22nd, *Hamlet*. Hamlet = Charles Dillon ; Claudius = Irving.

On September 13th the playbills announced the "farewell benefit of Mr Irving, previous to his departure for the Princess's Theatre, London." *The Lady of Lyons* was played, with Irving as Claude and Miss Julia St George as Pauline. Irving said a few words to his friends, after which the performance closed with the farce *Mother and Child are Doing Well*.

On November 1st 1859, the Theatre opened with an Italian Opera Company, which included the great Mdle. Titiens. It performed for four nights, and on the 5th the dramatic season began with a performance of *Richard III*. Gloster = Edmonstone Shirra ; Henry IV. = Charles Cooke, a very good "heavy" actor from the Theatre Royal, Birmingham ; Buckingham = E. D. Lyons ; Richmond = Wyndham ; Tressel = Alfred Paget,* from the Theatre Royal, Bristol ; Lady Ann = Miss Sophie Miles ; Duchess of York = Miss Nicol.

On November 28th, John Chester, who was engaged as principal low comedian, made his appearance, playing Gregory in *The Two Gregories*. He only played for a few nights, and on his leaving, his place was filled by Fisher. The pantomime *Babes in the Wood*, produced December 19th, was from Logan's pen, but it does not seem have taken.

June 4th 1860, Charles Mathews made his first appearance here after his return from America, where he had married Mrs Davenport,† whose first appearance here was on June 4th, as Countess of Fresilian in *The Game of Speculation*.

June 18th, last night of season and benefit of Mr and Mrs Wyndham, when were played *Soldier's Daughter* and *Rory O'More*, in the latter of which Wyndham made his first appearance in the part of Rory.

During the summer months the Theatre was open from June 23rd to October 22nd, and the winter season (1860-61) commenced on November 3rd.

* Was a son of Samuel Phelps. He was afterwards known in London as Edmund Phelps, and died in Edinburgh, April 2nd 1870, aged 32.

† February 1858.

Miss Julia Day, an American actress, appeared for the first time in Edinburgh on November 12th, the play being *Our American Cousin*. The pantomime *Jack the Giant Killer* was produced on December 21st. One scene, representing the exterior of King Arthur's Tavern, was expressly painted by Sam Bough, A.R.S.A. The pantomime was from the pen of H. J. Byron. King Arthur was played by Sam Johnson; the Giant = E. Saker, who had a splendid make-up for the part; Jack's mother = R. Saker; Jack = Miss Henrietta Watson; Clown = Hildebrandt.

On the 18th February Wilkie Collins' *Woman in White* was produced with the following cast:—Sir Percival Glyde = Charles Cooke; Count Fosco = Fitzjames; F. Fairlie = Foote; Laura = Miss Robberds; Marian Halcombe = Miss Agnes Markham. This piece was a great success, and ran till March 2nd, when it had to be withdrawn to allow Mr and Mrs Charles Kean to appear.

With the opening of the summer season on June 24th 1861, occurred one of the most important productions of Wyndham's management, namely, *The Colleen Bawn*, which was then played for the first time in Edinburgh. The cast was as follows;—Myles = Wyndham; Hardress = E. D. Lyons; Kyrle Daly = Huntley; Corrigan = Lewis; Danny Mann = Charles Verner; Bertie O'Moore = Fitzjames; Hyland Creigh = Morton; Father Tom = D. Leeson; Mrs Cregan = Mrs Hudson Kirby; Ann Chute = Miss Sarah Thorne; Sheelah = Miss Eliza Terry; Kathleen Creagh = Miss S. Davis; Eily = Mrs Margaret Eburne. It ran till July 27th, on which evening Miss Lydia Thompson made her first appearance here, playing Valentine in *Magic Toys*.

The Colleen Bawn was revived on February 10th 1862, J. M. Graham playing Danny Mann. It ran till the 21st, on which evening was produced for the first time in Edinburgh *The Octoroon*. Scenery by W. Gordon and Hart. Salem Scudder = Wyndham; George Peyton = C. Weston; Jacob M'Closkey = J. M. Graham; Wahnotee = Ed. Saker; Captain Ratts = C. Cooke; Colonel Pointdexter = Courtly; Lafouche = R. Saker; Picayune Paul = Miss S. Davis; Pete = D. Leeson; the Clerk = Pillans; Zoe = Mrs W. H. Eburne. Although a great success the *Octoroon* did not take so well as the *Colleen Bawn*, and indeed the latter drama was played along with the *Octoroon* for a number of evenings towards the close of its run, so as to strengthen the attraction. On March 15th the two plays were given for the last time. On March 31st was produced for the first time in Edinburgh Edmund

Falconer's sensational drama *Peep o' Day*. For this production several special engagements were made; including those of Miss Heath and Wilson Barrett. This piece proved a great success, and ran till April 23rd.

The last nights of Miss Nicol's appearing in public were during May, on the 23rd of which month she took her farewell benefit, and announced in the bills that she "offers her heartfelt thanks for the kind favour bestowed on her during so many past years." She played for her benefit Widow Warren in *Road to Ruin*, and Miss Durable in *Raising the Wind*, and she spoke an address in company with some other members of the company. May 31st was the last night of the season, and was for the benefit of Mr and Mrs Wyndham. Miss Nicol appeared on this evening for the last time on any stage, playing the Hostess in *The Honeymoon*, and afterwards took her final farewell of her Edinburgh friends.

Miss (Emma) Nicol's career was a most remarkable one; its first connection with the stage is not on record, but it certainly dated back almost to the time of her mother's first appearance in Edinburgh. She was undoubtedly a member of the company in 1812-13, so that when she retired she had completed her stage jubilee. She had three sisters, all of whom appeared on the stage at early ages. Chambers makes the mistake of saying that Miss Nicol was the original Mattie in *Rob Roy*; that part was originally played at the Theatre Royal by Miss Stanfield, and Miss Nicol was the Martha, a very small part; but in 1821 she appeared as Mattie, and she played the same part before the King in 1822. In 1822 she also played Madge Wildfire in *The Heart of Midlothian*, Maria in *Twelfth Night*, Miss Neville in *She Stoops*, and many other good parts. In 1823 she left Edinburgh, and did not reappear here till November 8th 1834, and was then described in the playbills as "from the Theatre Royal, Drury Lane." She must have gained great experience during her travels, for on returning to Edinburgh she immediately succeeded to her mother's line of parts, which she continued to play till her retirement. Miss Nicol was one of the last of the class of provincial actors (in Edinburgh, at any rate), who, having a comfortable home and engagement in the country, were content to remain there in the full confidence and respect of their managers, and regarded by the audience as friends. There were many such throughout the country at one time; but they have all passed away, and the class is dead, never to be revived.

A proof of Miss Nicol's versatility is afforded by the success with

which she adapted herself to the necessities of burlesque acting when such pieces became popular. She was an old woman at the time, and yet in many burlesque parts, notably Queen Elizabeth in *Kenilworth*, and Dame Lucia in *The Maid and the Magpie*, she showed such extraordinary humour and spirit, as to be pronounced not one whit inferior to Mrs Selby, the original in these parts. After her retirement she removed to London, where she died in November 1877.

Edward Saker rented the Theatre from Wyndham, and opened it for an "after season" on June 7th 1862, with *The Lady of the Lake*. James Fitzjames = Morton; Roderick Dhu = Charles Cooke.

On April 19th 1863 the Pyne & Harrison Opera Company produced for the first time *The Lily of Killarney*. Myles = W. Harrison; Hardress = George Perren; Danny Mann = H. Corri; Father Tom = J. G. Patey; Corrigan = J. Rouse; O'Moore = Charles Lyall; Ann Chute = Miss Thirlwall; Mrs Cregan = Mrs Aynsley Cook; Eily = Miss Louisa Pyne.

E. A. Sothern made his first appearance in Edinburgh on May 25th, appearing in *Our American Cousin*.

On September 21st Mr and Mrs Dion Boucicault made their first appearance, playing Myles and Eily in *Colleen Bawn*; and on October 19th 1863, the season closed with the usual benefit to Mr and Mrs Wyndham.

About 3.45 on the afternoon of January 13th 1865, the gas man belonging to the Theatre was employed lighting the "battens," when, as was not uncommon as long as the old method of lighting by hand was in use, the light on the end of the long pole came in contact with, and ignited a sky piece or "border" that was suspended above. The gas man as well as a carpenter immediately proceeded to cut down the burning canvas; but (through the knife of the latter slipping from his hand and falling to the ground, it is said) before this had been effected, the flames had caught hold of more than one piece of scenery, and in an incredibly short space of time, notwithstanding the strenuous efforts of several other men who rushed to help, the workmen not only had to retreat, but had considerable difficulty in escaping from the building. The alarm was at once given, but nothing could be done to save the Theatre, which, in less than fifteen minutes, was a raging furnace. The firemen, who speedily arrived, turned their attention to saving the adjoining property, St Mary's Catholic Chapel principally attracting their attention, for the north gable of the Theatre began to show unmistakable signs of bulging out. A

large chimney stack that surmounted this wall bent over the roof of the chapel, and almost without warning fell, crashing through slates, beams, and everything. Several men were inside endeavouring to save such moveables as they could; but though a shout had gone up from those outside for them to leave instantly, several had not had time to escape, and were crushed under the fallen debris. Willing hands strove with might and main to get at these poor creatures, in hopes they might still be alive, Dean of Guild Lorimer in particular setting a splendid example to those who had courage enough to follow him into the ruined building. In a few minutes another cry arose that the whole north wall was falling, and a rush was made by the rescuers; Lorimer was striving to extricate a poor fellow who was still alive, although jammed in with stones, and remained a moment after the others had fled to complete the rescue, when, with a noise like thunder, and a concussion that is said to have shaken the ground, the wall fell into the chapel and killed both him and the man he was trying to save. Wyndham (who was in London at the time) lost considerably by the fire, and much sympathy was shown for the families of those killed in the chapel. A subscription was set on foot for them, and a benefit was given at the Princess's in their aid.

There was little delay in getting a new Theatre erected, for on December 2nd 1865 the third building on the site (David M'Gibbon, architect) was opened by Wyndham, who was again lessee. An opening address, from the pen of W. H. Logan, was spoken, after which the plays of *London Assurance* and *Aunt Charlotte's Maid* were given. The prices were 3s., 2s., 1s. 6d., 1s., and 6d. A pantomime, entitled *Robin Hood*, from the pen of F. C. Burnand, was duly brought out; and on March 1st Miss Siddons,* "great-granddaughter of the Mrs Siddons," was announced to make her first appearance on the stage. She played Juliet to Henry Vandenhoff's Romeo.

March 8th, *Arrah-Na-Pogue* was played for the first time in Edinburgh. M'Coul = Richard Saker; Fanny Power = Miss Hunt; O'Grady = Powrie; Shaun the Post = Wyndham; Arrah = Miss Nelly Palmer; Major Coffin = J. B. Howard.† It ran until April 14th. On August 27th 1866 Wyndham revived *Rob Roy* with much success; the scenery and mountings were all well got up, and the cast was strong. Rob Roy = J. B. Howard; Bailie = Campbell; Rashleigh = Wyndham; Dougal = E. Saker; Helen

* Mrs Scott Siddons, now well known as a reader.

† This was his first appearance in Edinburgh.

= Mrs Wyndham; Owen = Odell; Galbraith = Anson; Diana = Eva Stella.* It ran till September 22nd, and was again put on in October, when Pillans played the Bailie.† The pantomime 1866-7 was *Little King Pippin*, after which no event of moment occurred until April 8th 1867, when J. B. Howard took his benefit, and played Richelieu and John Mildmay (*Still Waters*), both for the first time.

A new version of *Guy Mannering* was brought out by Wyndham on July 1st 1867. The alterations on the commonly played edition do not seem to have been a success, at any rate they were criticised pretty severely in the public press. Dominie Sampson = Odell; Dandie = Pillans; Meg Merrilees = Mrs Wyndham; Dirk Hatterick = J. B. Howard; Lucy Bertram = Helen Kirk. It ran till July 27th; and on the 29th *Rob Roy* was again revived, with Diana = Helen Kirk; and Helen = Miss Marie Billings; the other parts being cast almost the same as during the previous year. The *Scotsman*, speaking of Howard's *Rob Roy*, said:—"From the first careful, painstaking, and hardworking, Mr Howard has made wonderful progress and improvement, and presents a capital *Rob Roy*, which bids fair to become one of the best on the stage."

The first of T. W. Robertson's plays performed in Edinburgh was *Ours* on September 9th 1867, J. Clarke playing in his original part of Hugh Chalcot, it being his first appearance here. Mrs Atkins was Lady Shendryn; Miss Sydney Cowell, Blanche Heye; Miss Margaret Young, Mary Netley; J. B. Howard, Angus M'Allister.

September 20th, *Caste*. Eccles = J. Clarke.

November 23rd, the *Flying Scud*, a silly play by Boucicault, which ran till the production of the pantomime on December 21st. J. B. Howard played Louis XI. for the first time, at his benefit on April 27th 1868.

During the summer of 1869 Messrs H. J. Loveday (musical director), J. B. Howard, and Fred. Dowland rented the Theatre from Wyndham for a short season; and on July 15th "the farewell benefit and last appearance but two of J. B. Howard, previous to his departure for Drury Lane."

The Haymarket company, under Buckstone, made their first visit here on September 6th 1869. Compton, Kendal, Chippendale, Howe, Buckstone junr., Mrs Chippendale, Miss Caroline Hill, Miss Madge Robertson, Miss Fanny Gwynne, were all in the company.

* Now known as Kate Santley.

† His first time in the part, October 29th.

Miss Helen Faucit commenced a series of farewell performances, previous to her final retirement from the stage, on November 29th 1869, her final appearance being on December 10th, when she played Rosalind.

To celebrate the Scott Centenary in 1871, Wyndham gave a season of Scottish plays, commencing with *Kenilworth*, on July 17th. The Duke of Leicester by J. B. Howard, from Drury Lane, under whose superintendence the piece was produced; the part of Queen Elizabeth by Mrs J. B. Howard. This ran till the 31st; and on August 1st *Rob Roy* was put on, with Mr and Mrs Howard as Rob and Helen respectively.

September 5th, was produced a new adaptation of "Old Mortality," entitled *Drumclog*. Henry Morton = J. B. Howard; Cuddie Headrigg = Pillans. Neither this nor a new adaptation of *Waverley* (produced September 11th) appear to have been greatly successful; the latter piece ran till the 23rd, when the special centenary performances ceased.

Howard took the Theatre for a summer season in 1872, when he produced the *Lady of the Lake* on a scale of great completeness, the scenery being by William Glover. Roderick Dhu = Howard; King James = J. H. Slater; Brian = J. Archer; Allan Bane = Pillans.

In 1873 Mr Howard again took the Theatre for the summer, and introduced to the Edinburgh audience J. K. Emmet (May 27th), and produced a new adaptation of "Old Mortality," entitled *1679*, by Charles Webb.

Nevin, Archer, and Daly took the Theatre for the summer months of 1874, and on February 6th 1875, nearly at the close of the run of the pantomime of *Jack and the Beanstalk*, the Theatre was once more burned to the ground, happily on this occasion without loss of life,

Wyndham now retired from management, and on January 27th 1876 a new Theatre Royal, which had been raised upon the old site, was opened with every augury of success by J. B. Howard, the piece being *The Shaughraun*, its first production here. The cast was:— Captain Molineux = J. H. Barnes; R. Ffolliot = J. H. Slater; Father Dolan = T. B. Bannister; Corry Kinchela = J. D. Beveridge; Harvey Duff = Tom Nerney; Conn = Hubert O'Grady; Claire Ffolliot = Rose Massey; Moya = Eveleen Rayne. An opening address from the pen of W. H. Logan was delivered by Mr J. B. Howard.

On June 10th 1876 an excellent production of *Nicholas Nickleby* was given, with Mrs J. B. Howard as Mrs Squeers, and W. Morgan as Squeers. July 17th, *Rob Roy* was brought out with great completeness. Rob = J. B. Howard; Helen = Mrs J. B. Howard; Dougal = Edward

Saker; the Bailie = Gourlay. This production proved a great success, and ran till August 19th.

During this and the few other "stock" productions, Mr Howard himself played lead, J. H. Slater supporting, and Miss Kate St Ange taking juvenile lead to Mrs Howard's principal lead, August 21st 1876, *Trial by Jury*, first time in Edinburgh. Fred Sullivan* played the "learned" Judge; Knight Aston, the Defendant; and Miss Clara Vesey, the Plaintiff.

Joseph Jefferson made his first appearance here on September 11th, and an interesting series of legitimate dramas was given from October 16th to 21st by the stock company. On October 23rd much expectation was occasioned by the first performance of Henry Irving as a "star." The house was packed, and many old playgoers were grouped together in the pit comparing notes as to their recollections of the great actor while he was yet a member of the stock company in the "Fifties." Doleful forebodings were freely indulged in, but as the piece (*Charles I.*) progressed opinions seemed to alter, and the performance was greeted with enthusiastic applause. From that day old playgoers invariably recollected how they had long ago predicted that Irving would some day "do something." On October 30th Irving played Hamlet for the first time in Edinburgh. He was supported by T. Swinbourne, A. W. Pinero, Walter Bentley, John Archer, Miss Isabel Bateman, Miss G. Pauncefort, &c.

November 6th, Edward Saker's splendid spectacular revival of *A Winter's Tale*, from Liverpool, in which Miss Rose Leclercq played Hermione.

On December 16th a morning performance was given in aid of the Celtic Chair, Professor Blackie being the particular patron. Mr Howard gave a masterly impersonation of John Mildmay in *Still Waters Run Deep*, and, for the first time in Edinburgh, his inimitable performance of Felix O'Callaghan in *His Last Legs*.

On April 16th 1877 Mr and Mrs J. B. Howard took their first managerial benefit, the plays being *The Wife's Secret* and *His Last Legs*. June 18th, *Dan'l Druce*, with Miss Florence Terry as Dorothy. On October 29th Irving reappeared; and the Christmas pantomime for 1877-8—*The Forty Thieves*—was produced on December 13th. This proved a great success, and ran till the beginning of March (1878), on the 4th of which month Mr and Mrs Howard took their second annual benefit.

Year after year the Royal continued to supply the demand for the

* Brother of the Composer.

best available companies on tour, but the day of stock companies had passed away, and the annals of the Edinburgh stage proper ceased. The history of travelling companies is a separate and distinct subject. In 1883 Mr Howard severed his connection with the Royal, and, as is well known, in conjunction with Mr F. W. Wyndham, opened the new Royal Lyceum on September 10th of that year.

After passing out of Mr Howard's hands, the Royal was let to Mr Heslop, but was again burned down June 30th 1884. Mr Cecil Beryl, of the Princess', Glasgow, having obtained the lease, the new house was opened by him on December 29th of the same year, and during 1887 Mr W. Hatton joined Mr Beryl as co-lessee.

MINOR THEATRES.

THE PRINCESS'.

It seems impossible to say when this building was first started as a place of public entertainment. About the year 1860 it would appear to have been used as a music hall, and at that period it was rented by W. Paterson, formerly property master at the Royal. Paterson soon transformed it into a Theatre, and seems to have got together very respectable companies. Among the names that these included may be mentioned Charles Harcourt, James Hillier, Beaumont Hughes, Charles Mortimer, Philip Day, Edward Righton, Walter Searle, N. C. Carroll, &c. At one time (1863-4) W. H. Channing was scene painter, and R. B. Stewart led a small but efficient orchestra. Although Paterson seems to have been a conscientious and careful manager, his venture did not pay, and in 1867 the building was again opened as a music hall, with T. J. Poole as manager, and a few months later, William Stephens became lessee, the variety business still being carried on.

On September 14th 1868, the "Royal Princess'" opened its doors under the new management of A. D. M'Neill. This gentleman, whose genial presence is yet so fresh in the memories of our playgoers, and who by his great talent, excellent management, and good citizenship, gained

the esteem of all with whom he came in contact, was a native of Edinburgh, having been born in our city in 1829. His father, Mr Alexander M'Neill, who was a member of the Scottish Bar, sent him to the High School and afterwards to the University here. He seems to have adopted the histrionic profession in London, and, having acted some little time there, went on tour in the provinces, but returned to the metropolis, and acted under Charles Dillon at the Lyceum. Birmingham next secured his services, and on leaving the midland capital he joined Edmund Glover's company at the Theatre Royal, Glasgow. In 1852 he married Jessie, eldest daughter of the famous Corbet Ryder. In 1862 M'Neill acquired the management of the Aberdeen Theatre, and it is worthy of remark, that during his term of management in the granite city, Wilson Barrett was for some time a member of his stock company.

The opening pieces in 1868 were *Ruth*, in which Miss Kate Saville impersonated the heroine, and the burlesque *The Field of the Cloth of Gold*. The company included:—F. Kilpack, H. Packenham, Beaufort, C. Coutts (from Birmingham), Appleby, G. W. Robinson, Gilbert, E. Webbe, Miss B. Colbridge, Miss D. Thirwall, Miss M. Webbe, Mrs H. Lacy, and Mrs Butler.

On September 28th M'Neill made his first appearance in Edinburgh, playing Richelieu to the Julie of Mrs Margaret Eburne.

The Field of the Cloth of Gold proved a success, and was followed upon October 14th by *Ixion*. October 24th, *Ticket-of-Leave Man*, with J. H. Clynds, who was a member of the company, as Bob Brierly; M'Neill playing Hawkshaw.

November 7th, *Rob Roy*. Rob = M'Neill, first time in Edinburgh. M'Neill's impersonation of the bold outlaw will ever remain stamped on the memories of those who saw it. He played it frequently in Edinburgh, his last appearance in public being in that part when he played it in the Lyceum Theatre on the occasion of a benefit kindly given on July 21st 1884 by Howard & Wyndham to Heslop, an unfortunate lessee of the Royal, on which occasion Mr J. B. Howard played Rashleigh.

On February 8th 1869, M'Neill produced a piece from his own pen, entitled *The Gloamin' and the Mirk; or, a Story of Modern Athens*. This proved a great success, and ran some fifteen nights. The cast was as follows:—Frank and Herbert Danvers = Clynds; Fox Skinner = H. Percy; Old Tom Fogg = Alexander; Dicky M'Scone = E. Webb; Paddy Corney = Blanchard; Hawksworth = T. R. Appleby; Bob Bannock =

Hastings; Sandy Tod, a street Arab = Miss Joanna Blake; Louisa Danvers = Miss Sallie Booth.

The summer season (1869) lasted from June 19th to September 11th, being opened by Wilson Barrett and Miss Heath, and closed with a performance of *Wandering Steenie* by M'Neill. The company included the following:—Misses Bella Mortimer, Nelly Parker, Agnes Darling, and Fanny Templeton; Mrs W. Ormsby; Frank Hill, J. Morton, H. Lindsay, Noel Austin, R. Medlicott, W. Granger, W. Evans, and G. Wilmott; A. Rednor being the leader of the orchestra.

The company for the following winter season (1869-70) was much the same as above. The season opened on September 18th. October 9th, *Faust and Marguerite*. Mephistopheles = Wilson Barrett.

On November 4th, M'Neill gave his memorable performance of Sir John Falstaff in *The Merry Wives of Windsor*; Wilson Barrett playing Master Ford.

December 10th, *Masks and Faces*, for Barrett's benefit. Triplet = Wilson Barrett; Sir Charles Pomander = M'Neill; Peg Woffington = Miss Heath.

December 18th, pantomime of *St George and the Dragon*. February 18th 1870, M'Neill's benefit, and first appearance in Edinburgh of Mrs M'Neill.*

On March 4th 1871, the summer season opened with an important revival of *Rob Roy*, in which M'Neill played Rob; W. D'Almaine, Francis; Miss Mary Townley, Diana; and George Fisher, the Bailie. It proved a great success, and induced M'Neill to undertake the revival of several more of the Waverley dramas. Fisher's Bailie, and his subsequent performances as Peter Peebles and Meg Dods, were inimitable. The second of the series was *Redgauntlet* (newly adapted by the manager), and was produced on the opening of the autumn and winter season (1871-2), August 8th. The parts of Charles Edward Stuart and Wandering Willie = M'Neill; Darsie Latimer = R. Medlicott; Justice Foxley = Frank Hill; Peter Peebles = Fisher. This ran till September 15th, and on the following night (16th) *St Ronan's Well* (also adapted by M'Neill) was brought out. The Earl of Ethrington = M'Neill; Francis Tyrell = Fred. Hastings; Josiah Cargil = J. Morton; Peregrine Touchwood = Frank Hill; Squire Moubray = R. Medlicott; Clara Moubray = Miss Marie Glynne; Meg Dods = George Fisher. This ran till October 11th.

* This is not correct; see page 488.

October 28th 1871, *Little Em'ly*. Mr Micawber and Dan'l Peggotty = M'Neill; Steerforth = Medlicott; Uriah Heep = Frank Hil. The pantomime was *Blue Beard* (December 16th 1871), and the season closed on February 16th 1872, with M'Neill's benefit.

On December 13th 1873 the winter season opened with the pantomime of *Cinderella*, in which Miss Emily Vining, T. Sennett, Frank Hill, and R. Medlicott played. On March 7th 1874 George Honey commenced a short engagement. The first production of *La Fille de Madame Angot* at this Theatre on June 22nd is worth noting. Madame Selina Dolaro, H. Corri, Knight Aston, and Miss Annie Howard were in the company. From this date stock companies practically ceased to exist, and the old well-defined winter and summer seasons became things of the past. A few stock productions were got up occasionally, but with the exception of the pantomimes, their importance was a minus quantity. The following brief notes will sufficiently indicate any important engagements that were played at the Princess'.

July 27th 1874, *Two Roses*. Digby Grant = Flocton; Our Mr Jenkins = George Thorne. November 14th, *Rob Roy*. Bailie Nicol Jarvie = M'Neill. February 22nd 1875, first appearance in Edinburgh of Walter Bentley.* June 14th, first time of *Giroflé and Girofla* in Edinburgh; Knight Aston, Henry Corri, and Miss Rebecca Isaacs in the company. August 16th, *Our Boys*. Talbot = E. W. Garden; Middlewick = Richard Younge; the Butler = H. J. Craven; Violet = Miss L. Vernon; Mary Melrose = Miss Fanny Brough.

The Theatre Royal being burnt down, M'Neill made the most of the opportunity to secure the various companies that had been thrown out of dates, and, by his spirited management, afforded the public of Edinburgh ample facilities for enjoying good acting, notwithstanding that only one theatre remained open. This had an excellent result on the fortunes of the theatre, as it brought hundreds of people about the place who otherwise would never have dreamt of going there.

August 30th 1875, Miss Lydia Thomson's *Blue Beard* company, with Lionel Brough, Miss Alice Atherton, Miss Rachel Sanger, Willie Edouin, and Charles Collette. September 20th, Miss Litton's company, including Charles Wyndham. December 6th, Vezin-Chippendale company, with Edmund Leathes, David Fisher junr., Ersser Jones, Compton,

* Son of Rev. Dr Begg.

Mrs H. Vezin, Mr and Mrs Chippendale, and other well known artistes in a round of standard plays.

July 10th 1876, *Broken Hearts*, by Gilbert, first time here, under the management of Frank Emery. September 25th, the Vokes family; and on December 14th 1876, M'Neill's successful run of management may be said to have culminated, when he produced what was perhaps the most successful pantomime of recent times, namely, *The Babes in the Wood*. The success was deserved, for all concerned worked well, and the exertions more particularly of Messrs Allen Thomas, Brown and Newlands, the sisters Mario, and little Bertie Farrell and Cissy Smith, were deserving of all praise. It ran till March 10th.

July 30th 1877, *Pink Dominos*, in which Alfred Maltby gave his nimitable impersonation of Old Tubbs.

The pantomime for 1877-8, *Puss in Boots*, was far from a success. June 17th 1878, *Les Cloches de Corneville*. Serpolette = Miss Kathleen Corri; Germaine = Miss Florence St John; Henri = Lithgo James; Gobo = Allen Thomas; Bailie = Mat. Robson. September 23rd, first night of *H.M.S. Pinafore* in Edinburgh. J. H. Ryley was the Sir Joseph; Charles J. Campbell, Ralph; Arthur Rousby, Dick Deadeye; Miss Douglas Gordon, Josephine; and Miss Fanny Edwards, Little Buttercup.

October 26th 1878, Miss Marriott, who was a frequent visitor to the Princess', played the part of young Norval in *Douglas* for her benefit.

August 4th 1879, *Diplomacy*. September 1st, the Carl Rosa company produced *Mignon* for the first time in Edinburgh. The late Joseph Maas, Leslie Crotty, Charles Lyall, Miss J. Yorke, Miss Georgina Burns, and Miss Julia Gaylord, were all in the cast. During the same engagement *Piccolino* was produced (September 3rd). September 22nd, *Madame Favart*, the part of the Marquis by Beerbohm Tree. The pantomime—the last produced in this house—was *Robinson Crusoe*. March 29th 1880, *Betsy*, first time here. November 29th, that most excellent of modern plays, *The Old Love and the New*, was produced. *The Pirates of Penzance* (first production here) did duty in the place of a pantomime. It was produced January 17th 1881, with David Fisher junr., G. W. Marnoch, George Marler, and Miss Laura Clement in the cast. On March 20th 1882 *Rob Roy* was revived, with a fine cast. M'Neill himself played Rob; the veteran Lloyd, Major Galbraith; W. Gourlay, the Bailie; and G. W. Traverner, Francis. The scenery was by R. S. Smythe and G. S. Evans (for many years the scenic artist of the theatre). It ran till April 1st.

For the Christmas season 1882-3 *Manteaux Noirs* was produced on December 25th; and the following season (1883-4) Miss Minnie Palmer was engaged.

On August 25th 1884 the house was reopened after extensive alterations and decorations, but on November 7th of the same year Mr M'Neill died, and the management of the Theatre passed into the hands of his son, W. A. M'Neill, who, with great spirit, continued the concern against the most powerful opposition. For Christmas 1884-5 *Falka* was produced (December 22nd to January 17th), and for 1885-6 *Erminie* (December 21st to end of January).

Some time after this, in order to obviate the difficulty of getting good travelling companies, M'Neill formed a stock company, which bravely struggled for several months, the last piece revived being the late lessee's *Gloamin' and the Mirk*. The house finally closed its doors on May 22nd 1886.

THE VICTORIA TEMPLE.

The "Mound," whereon now stand the buildings of the National Gallery and Royal Scottish Academy, our older citizens may remember as being a spot of ground covered with little workshops, travelling caravans, and wild beast shows. Among the edifices that stood there about 1850, was a huge wooden Rotunda, which was originally opened in 1823 to exhibit pictures of the battle of Waterloo, &c. Another building was the Victoria Temple, which, from its connection with William Gourlay, the actor, is worthy of a slight notice in these pages.

In January 1848* we find Gourlay in possession of the place, with a fully equipped dramatic company, which included D. Stewart (comedian and comic vocalist), W. H. Eburne, Fenwick, and Smythe (leader of the orchestra). In May, Mungall made his appearance; and Ray, from the Royal, and T. C. King, from the York Circuit, starred during June. In July 1848 Gourlay applied for a licence, in terms of the Act 6 and 7 Victoria, cap. 78. The application was refused by 12 to 9, and Gourlay appealed to the Quarter Sessions and gained his case. On September 4th 1848 it opened as the "Royal Victoria Theatre." T. C. King remained as lead, and George Webster† was engaged as heavy man, Scottish comedian, &c.;

* The place had then been open for some years under Gourlay's management.

† Afterwards the famous Scottish comedian, whose Bailie was thought by many to be as good as Mackay's

Miss Aitken was the leading lady. On September 6th Webster played Wandering Steenie, and on the 11th Bailie Nicol Jarvie to King's Rob, Mungall's Major, and Gourlay's Dougal. R. Younge appeared during October. In June 1849 James Melrose joined the company; and on September 16th Mrs Pollock (late Mrs Corbet Ryder), with Mr Pollock and Miss Jessie Ryder,* paid a visit to this building, which, after a somewhat chequered existence, was pulled down soon afterwards to make room for the projected improvements.

THE SOUTHMINSTER.

The building situated in Nicolson Street, and known at different times as the Southminster, Queen's Theatre, and at the present time as Newsome's Circus, was used as a place of public entertainment from an early date. It seems to have been built originally by Ducrow, some time in the Twenties, and used by him for several seasons as an amphitheatre or circus. In 1830 it was called "Royal Amphitheatre—late Ducrow's."† Some time in the Forties the Cookes had a circus there, soon after which a half caste called Pablo Fanque took the place, and built a stage where regular plays were acted. Bruce Norton and the elder Gomersal had it for a short time; and, as already noted, during the winter of 1853-4‡ Wyndham's company occupied the place while the Italian Opera was in the Royal. Subsequent to that date it was called "Dunedin Hall," and then the "Alhambra" Music Hall, the latter name being given to it by Paterson, who occupied it for some time previous to going over to the Princess'. As the Southminster, it enjoyed a few brief moments of fame, when, upon the destruction of the Theatre Royal by fire in 1875, the manager made arrangements with Mapleson to give three nights of opera, commencing March 4th; but on the 14th March the building was burnt to the ground. In a very short space of time it was rebuilt in a more substantial manner, and on December 13th 1875 was reopened as "The Queen's Theatre," with a performance of *La Sonnambula*, in which Albani appeared, the company including Zara Thalberg, and other noted artistes. After being occupied as a theatre by J. B. Howard, the Queen's was again destroyed by fire, since which time the building erected on the site has been used as a circus and place of variety entertainment.

* Married Mr A. D. M'Neill in 1852.

† The above information is obtained from bills in the writer's possession.

‡ See p. 456.

THE EDINBURGH THEATRE.

The promoters of the Edinburgh Theatre were not the only people who looked forward with confidence to the financial success of the undertaking. If a magnificent building, handsome appointments, and the most elaborate machinery for working everything on the stage, could have made the scheme a success, the Edinburgh Theatre would probably have been still in existence. It was opened* on December 20th 1875, under Wybert Reeve, whose management cannot be recorded as brilliant. He engaged a stock company, which included R. S. Pillans (low comedian), W. H. Hallatt (juvenile lead), E. T. Webber (walking gentleman), Hilton (old man), Miss Kate St Ange (light lead), Rose Saker, Blanche Colbridge, Mrs Bickerstaff (old women), and Miss Adeline Stanhope (lead). W. Daly was director of the orchestra, and H. Dambmann, leader. On the night of the opening, after "God save the Queen," and an address by Wybert Reeve, *Used Up* was played. Sir Charles Coldstream = Wybert Reeve. After which, *His Last Legs*. Felix O'Callaghan = R. H. Wyndham, who appeared for that night only. The performance to conclude with the farce *Brother Sandy*, in which Pillans played Sandy M'Donald. On December 21st, 22nd, and 23rd, *As You Like It* was played, with the following cast:—Jaques = W. Bentley; Touchstone = Compton; Adam = Chippendale; Orlando = Hallatt; Rosalind = Miss Stanhope. An exceedingly interesting first appearance was that of Salvini on March 27th 1876. His first play was *Othello*, in which he was supported by his own company. *Othello* was again given on the 29th and April 1st. On March 31st and April 3rd he played Hamlet, and on April 5th Macbeth.

The house was closed for some little time, and reopened on Monday, August 14th, for the autumn season, when *Princess Toto* was given by Miss Kate Santley, J. H. Ryley, J. Wainwright, &c. On August 17th the Queen unveiled the Albert Memorial in Charlotte Square, and in the evening some of the Royal suite visited the Theatre. On August 28th *The Lady of the Lake* was produced with much magnificence, A. D. M'Neill playing Roderick Dhu. On September 18th John Clayton gave his wonderfully powerful impersonation of Hugh Trevor in *All for Her*. Mathews, the Bandmanns, and Talbot, followed during the autumn, and on November 13th Mapleson's Italian Opera Company commenced a twelve nights engagement. The last night was *Fidelio* (November 25th), when

* It is perhaps worth noting that this house was opened under Royal Letters Patent, this privilege having been transferred from the Royal, to which house it was eventually restored.

Mdlle. Titiens took her benefit, and gave what proved to be her last performance in Edinburgh. Carl Rosa's Company occupied the boards from February 19th 1877 to March 3rd, during which period were produced *Pauline*, *Fidelio*, *Zampa*, *Flying Dutchman*, and *Siege of Rochelle*.

John Coleman's superb spectacle production of *Henry V.* was produced on March 5th; and on April 2nd 1877 Mrs Stirling announced a twelve nights' engagement, and with her last performance on Saturday, April 14th (*Masks and Faces*), the history of this splendidly equipped theatre comes to a close.

The building was shortly afterwards exposed for sale by public roup, and eventually knocked down to a dissenting body of Scottish Presbyterians, who paid for it about one fourth of the original cost. The entire fittings, furniture, &c., were sold off by auction, and, in process of time, the place, after an extensive process of rebuilding, was opened as a Synod Hall and Offices of the U. P. Church.

A P P E N D I X.

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No. I.

PROLOGUE AT THE OPENING OF THE THEATRE ROYAL IN EDINBURGH,
DECEMBER 9TH 1769. WRITTEN BY JAMES BOSWELL, ESQ. SPOKEN
BY MR DAVID ROSS.

Scotland for learning and for arms renown'd
In ancient annals, is with lustre crown'd,
And still she shares whate'er the world can
yield,
Of lettered fame, or glory in the field :
In every distant clime Great Britain knows,
The Thistle springs promiscuous with the
Rose.
While in all points with other lands she vied,
The Stage alone to Scotland was denied :
Mistaken zeal, in times of darkness bred,
O'er the best minds its gloomy vapours spread ;
Taste and religion were suppos'd at strife,
And 'twas a sin—to view this glass of life !
When the Muse ventur'd the ungracious task,
To play elusive with unlicens'd mask,
Mirth was restrain'd by statutory awe,
And tragic greatness fear'd the scourge of
law ;

Illustrious heroes arrant vagrants seem'd,
And gentlest nymphs were sturdy beggars
deem'd.

This night, lov'd George's free enlighten'd
age

Bids Royal favour shield the Scottish stage ;
His Royal favour ev'ry bosom cheers ;
The Drama now with dignity appears.
Hard is my fate if murmurings there be,
Because the favour is announc'd by me.

Anxious, alarm'd, and aw'd by ev'ry frown,
May I entreat the candour of the town ?
You see me here by no unworthy art ;
My all I venture—where I've fixed my heart.
Fondly ambitious of an honest fame,
My humble hopes your kind indulgence
claim.

I wish to hold no right but by your choice
I'll risk my patent on the public voice.

MRS SIDDONS' ADDRESS, NOVEMBER 4TH 1828.

Mrs SIDDONS. (*Speaking behind*).
Don't talk to me ; I tell ye it's a shame,
And all before the curtain say the same.
(*Entering.*)

I enter certainly in strange confusion,
But hope you'll pardon my abrupt intrusion,
When I confess my present situation
Is one so full of pain and irritation,
That, no more able my complaints to
smother,

At your Tribunal I impeach—my Brother,
Of misdemeanours without stint or measure,
Of disobedience to my royal pleasure ;
For say whate'er I will, his pompous frown,
And plump *negatur*, knock my project down,
Till my whole reign's one scene of pet and
worry,

Like poor Queen Mary and *her* Regent
Murray.

To-night my wish to speak to you was met

By the old answer, " 'tis n't etiquette ;"
 But I'm determined, and now ask the reason,
 If with a speech my brother *ends* the season,
 Why I, when here beginning one anew,
 May not indulge in speechifying too ?
 'Tis hard enough resigning the last word,
 But more to humour him is quite absurd.
 He with a bow may see you out, and then
 I will with curtsies welcome you again.
 Which is the more judicious system, tell,—
 His most respectfully bidding you farewell ?
 Or the new practice I to-night begin
 Of, as respectfully, bidding you walk in ?
 At least I'll try it ; when all's done and past,
 I can't make this year worse than he the
 last.
 Indeed I'm somewhat tired of the elf,
 And think of looking into things myself ;
 For tho' reluctant to speak ill, I own,
 Of "Regent Murray," he mistakes the town.
 As—don't be angry now, but, *entre nous*,
 'Tis not *so much* what's good, as what is
 new,
 Oft brings you here ; and truly 'tis a bore,
 For ever hearing what you've heard before ;
 To see the bills present you nothing daily
 But the old names—Jones, Denham, and the
 Bailie.
 At night compelled to stay at home, or go
 And see "Rob Roy," "Guy Mannering,"
 and "No ;"
 Paul Pry's intrusions, or Pong Wong's
 grimaces,
 Pritchard's deep agonies, or Mason's faces.
 Then, tho' from "Indies to the Pole" we
 rove,
 'Tis all "Sweet Home," "Young Love," or
 "Kelvin Grove."
 Nay, I expect some night, the Thane of
 Cawdor
 Will introduce "Blue Bonnets o'er the
 Border,"
 Nor should I wonder Hotspur taught his
 Starling
 To tell King Henry, "Charlie was *his* dar-
 ling"—
 "Toujours Perdrix" wont do, that's very
 clear ;
 So, Call Boy (*enter Call Boy*) send Mr
 Murray here.
 (*Exit Call Boy*).
 And on the instant, friends let's try now
 whether

We can't reform this system altogether.

Enter Mr MURRAY.

Come hither, manager. (*Mr MURRAY bows respectfully.*)

Some hold opinion

You've lately failed in talents for dominion ;
 So now to skill and character depone,
 Or else "Othello's occupation's gone ;"
 For if convicted here, beyond all doubt
 I take the reins myself and walk you out.

Mr MURRAY.

Sister, I needs must think some better
 way—

Mrs H. SIDDONS.

I care not, William, what you think or say.
 Answer this question—Did last season pay ?
 No.—Then, as like kings, the public do no
 wrong,
 To managers, like ministers, belong
 All faults and failures. But I'll talk no
 more ;

These are your judges, as I said before.
 (*To the audience.*) To your decision I refer
 his cause.

Guilty, a hiss ;—Not Guilty—then, applause.

Mr MURRAY (to the audience and advancing.)

Soft you, a word or two before I go—
 I've done the state some service, perhaps you
 know ;

No more of that. I pray you in your letters,
 Stating these deeds unlucky to my betters,
 Speak of me as I am, extenuate naught,
 Nor in malicious language set down aught—
 Then must you speak of one, who, truth to
 tell,

Managed not wisely, but intended well,
 Who owns, a lady's anger to appease,
 He fail'd in judgment, not in wish to please ;
 Set you this down, and set you down besides,
 He bends at once, to what your voice de-
 cides.

If murmurs follow me, I'm lost of men,
 But if applause—Richard's himself again !

Mrs H. SIDDONS.

Nem. con. 'tis carried ; then I re-instate him,
 And Generalissimo anew create him.

My hand shall sign, 'tis yours must set the
 seal,—

A kindness which I trust he'll ever feel,
 And, like myself, for ever keep in view,
 He owes his All—to you—and you—and you.
 (*To Gallery, Boxes, and Pit.*)

FAREWELL ADDRESS WRITTEN BY SIR WALTER SCOTT, AND SPOKEN BY
MRS H. SIDDONS ON HER FAREWELL BENEFIT, MONDAY, MARCH
29TH 1830.

The curtain drops—the mimic scene is past—
One word remains—the saddest and the last :
A word which oft in careless mode we say,
When parting friends have pass'd a social day ;
As oft pronounced in agony of heart,
When friends must sever, or when lovers part ;
Or, o'er the dying couch, in whispers spoken,
When the frail thread of life is all but broken—
When all that ear can list, or tongue can tell,
Are the last mournful accents, fare ye well !
Such is the spell the actress must divide
From duties long her pleasure and her pride,
So brief the syllables that must bid adieu
To public life, to Scotland, and to you ;
To hopes—to doubts—to efforts—and to fears,
And all the business of my scenic years.
Yet ere we part—and even now a tear
Bedims my eye to think our parting near—
Fain would I speak how deeply in my breast
Will the remembrance of your kindness rest !
Fain would I tell, but words are cold and weak,
It is the heart, the heart alone can speak.
The wanderer may rejoice to view once more
The smiling aspect of her native shore ;
Yet oft in mingled dreams of joy and pain
She'll think she sees this beauteous land
again,
And then, as now, will fond affection trace

The kindness that endeared her dwelling-
place.
Now, then, it must be said—though from the
heart
The mournful accents scarcely will depart,
Lingering, as if they feared to break some
spell—
It must be uttered—friends, kind friends, fare-
well !
One suit remains—you will not scorn to hear
The last my lips shall falter on your ear—
When I am far, my patrons, oh ! be kind
To the dear relative I leave behind ;
He is your own, and, like yourselves, may
claim
A Scottish origin—a Scottish name :
His refined talents—let the truth be told,
A sister in a brother's cause is bold—
Shall cater for your eve of pleasure still,
With equal ardour, and improving skill ;
And though too oft the poor performer's lot
Is but to bloom, to fade, and be forgot,
Whene'er the mimic sceptres they resign,
A gentler destiny I feel as mine ;
For as the brother moves before your eyes,
Some memory of his sister must arise ;
And in your hearts a kind remembrance dwell
Of her, who once again sighs forth—farewell !

No. II.

PRINCIPAL MEMBERS OF THE THEATRE ROYAL COMPANIES FROM 1769
TO 1851.

Every care has been taken to make the following lists as complete as possible, and no name has been inserted for which there has not been a sufficient guarantee. Where any doubt existed as to the correctness of including a particular name in any of the seasons, it has been omitted rather than incur the chance of making a mistake.

1769-70. D. Ross, lead ; Beatt, Collins (old men), Jackson (second lead), Lancashire (low com.*), Parsons (tenor), Mrs Baker (lead), Mrs Jackson.

* Contractions used :—T.R. = Theatre Royal ; D.L. = Drury Lane ; Hay. = Haymarket ; Ly. = Lyceum ; C.G. = Covent Garden ; E. Op. House = English Opera House ; B'ham. = Birmingham ; Dub. = Dublin ; Glas. = Glasgow ; L'pool. = Liverpool ; Manr. = Manchester ; Com. = Comedy ; Voc. = Vocalist.

- 1770-1. Bayne, Collins, Dancer, Didier, S. Foote, Farrell, Fearon, Grove, Knowles, Lancashire, Maurell, Robson, Seymour, Sowdon, Vowell, Vandermere, Woodward, Weston, Mrs Baker, Mrs Collins, Mrs Didier, Mrs Fearon, Miss Hart, Mrs Jewell, Mrs Jackson, Mrs Weston.
- 1771-2. Adcock, Digges, Fleetwood, Greville, Hague, Knight, Moss, Woods, Young, Miss Adcock, Mrs Baker, Mrs Greville, Mrs and Miss Granger, Mrs Hartley, Mrs Pinto, Miss Withington.
- 1772-3. Digges, Fleetwood, Inchbald, Moss, Wilson, Woods, Ward, Weston, Mrs Charteris (old women), Mrs Inchbald, Mrs Weston (late Miss Adcock), Miss Withington.
- 1773-4. Charteris (low com.), Digges, Death (walking gent.), Inchbald, Moss, Woods, Wilson, Ward, Weston, Mrs Charteris, Mrs Inchbald, Mrs Jewell, Elliot (scene painter).
- 1774-5. Beynon (lead), Digges, Dutton (low com.), Hallion, Inchbald, Jackson (from February 13th), Woods, Mrs Inchbald, Mrs Jackson, Mrs Jewell, Mrs Simpson (juv. lead), Miss Stamper, Elliot (scene painter).
- 1775-6. See page 167.
- 1776-7. The same, *except* Inchbald and Ross ; *add* King, M'Cready, Richards, Wilkinson, and Mrs Richards.
- 1777-8. Males the same *except* Digges, Dutton, King, and M'Cready ; *add* Jefferson (lead from D. L.), Mrs Charteris, Mrs Jarrat (D. L.), Mrs Lee, Miss Mansell (Bath), Mrs Mills, Mrs Sparks, Mrs Woods, Mrs Webb, Miss Withington.
- 1778-9. See foot of page 173.
- 1779-80. Bailey (T. R., Dub.), Cautherby, Chalmers, Charteris, Hallion, Lane (second lead), Lyon, Woods, Wilkinson, Mrs Hart, Mrs Hitchcock, Mrs Montague (T. R., Dub.), Mrs Shield, Mrs Woods.
- 1780-1. Charteris, Fowler (old men), Graham, Heaphy, Hallion, Powell, Ross, Stanton (tenor), Taplin, Woods, Miss Hurst, Mrs Heaphy, Mrs Taplin, Mrs Woods.
- 1781-2. *Add* to names mentioned on p. 183 Gaudry (tenor), John Jackson, Knight, Marshall, Sutherland, Simpson, Tannet, Williamson, Mrs Gaudry, Mrs Henderson, Mrs Jackson, Miss Kirby, Mrs Marshall, Mrs Mountfort, Mrs Tannet, Mrs Woods.
- 1782-3. Bell, Bland, Charteris, Dodd, Fowler, Girst, Hallion, Lamash, Moss, Mountfort, Sparks, Simpson, Tannet, Ward, Woods, Mrs Bulkley, Mrs Baddeley, Mrs Burden, Mrs Cornelys, Mrs Charteris, Miss Farren, Mrs Jackson, Mrs Mountfort, Mrs Sparks, Mrs Walcot, Mrs Woods.
- 1783-4. Males same as last *except* Dodd, Fowler, Girst, and Ward, and *add* Collins, W. Wells, and Davis, Mrs Baddeley, Mrs Charteris, Mrs Henderson, Mrs Jackson, Miss Morris, Mrs Mountfort, Mrs Sparks, Mrs Tannet, Mrs W. Wells.
- 1784-5. Bell, Bland, Clinch (T. R., Dub., February 21st), Charteris, Duncan (T. R., Dub., January 15th), Davis, Everard (D. L., 10th January), Hallion, Kipling, Lamash, Mountfort, Powell, Woods, Ward, W. Wells, Waylett (January 10th), Mrs Bulkley, Mrs Baddeley, Mrs Charteris, Mrs Duncan, Mrs Kipling, Mrs Jackson, Mrs Mountfort, Mrs Sparks, Mrs W. Wells, Mrs Woods.
- 1785-6. Bell, Betterton (T. R., Dub., January 26th), Bland, Charteris, Clinch, Hallion, Iliff (January 19th), Kipling, Lamash, Mountfort, Mayson, Sparks, Wilson, Woods, W. Wells, Mrs Crawford, Mrs Charteris, Mrs Iliff, Mrs Jackson, Mrs Kipling, Mrs Mountfort, Mrs Sparks, Mrs W. Wells, Mrs Woods.
- 1786-7. *Add* to names on page 198, Archer, Bland, senr., Charteris, senr. and junr., Fennell, Hallion, Mayson, Sparks, Villars, Mrs Charteris, Mrs Iliff, Mrs Jackson, Mrs Lamash, Mrs Villars, Mrs Woods, Mrs W. Wells.
- 1787-8. Same as last year *except* Mr and Mrs Iliff, Mr and Mrs Lamash, Mr and Mrs Kemble, Mayson, Mr and Mrs Robinson, Ward, Yates, and Mrs Wroton ; *add* Williamson, Mrs Brooks, Mrs Bulkley.
- 1788-9. Archer, Bell, Bland, Charteris, senr. and junr., Davis, Finch, Hallion, King, Moss

- Sparks, Wilson, Woods, Williamson, Mrs Barresford, Mrs Charteris, Mrs Coates, Mrs Hughes, Mrs Jackson, Mrs Sparks, Mrs W. Wells.
- 1789-90. *Add* to names mentioned on p. 209, Bell, Bland, Charteris, senr. and junr., Mountfort, Mrs Archer, Mrs Charteris, Mrs Sparks, Mrs Mountfort.
- 1790-1. Bell, Biggs, Bland, Bew, Charteris, senr. and junr., Guion, Hallion, Kennedy, Lamash, Mountfort, Ryder, Sparks, Toms, Woodroffe, Williams, Williamson, Mrs Biggs, Mrs Barresford (lead), Mrs Charteris, Mrs Jackson, Mrs Kennedy, Mrs Mountfort, Miss R. and Miss Ryder, Mrs Sparks, Mrs W. Wells.
- 1791-2. See pages 215 and 216.
- 1792-3. See pages 219, 220-1-2.
- 1793-4. See pages 223-4.
- 1794-5. Barnett (tenor, C. G.), Blanchard (C. G.), S. Clark, Davis, Damash, S. Kemble, Nunns, H. Siddons, Woods, Williams, Wewitzer, Underwood (Bath), Miss Barnett, Mrs Blanchard (D. L.), Mrs Egan (late Miss Hartley), Mrs S. Kemble, Mrs Walcot.
- 1795-6. *Add* to names on second half of p. 228—Davis, Hallion, Scriven, H. Siddons, Williams, Mrs Davis, Mrs S. Kemble, Mrs Walcot.
- 1796-7. Bew, Barnett, Bramwell, Bennett (Norwich), Cory, Creswell (T. R., L'pool, January 16), Decamp (D. L., January 16), Egan, Hallion, S. Kemble, Melvin (Margate), Rock, Ryley, Scriven, H. Siddons, Woods, Miss Biggs, Mrs Bew, Mrs Creswell (T. R., L'pool). Miss Gough, Miss Kemble (Newcastle. 16th January), Mrs Ryley, Mrs Walcot.
- 1797-8. See second half of p. 231.
- 1798-9. Bew, Bland, Fisher (T. R., Man'r), Power (T. R., L'pool), Rock, H. Siddons, Scriven, Walpole (T. R., L'pool), Woods, Mrs Atkins, Mrs Bew, Miss Biggs, Miss Fisher, Mrs Knight, Miss F. Kemble, Mrs S. Kemble, Miss Kemble, Miss Smith (Bath).
1800. S. Kemble, Macready, Rock, H. Siddons, Swendall, Woods, Miss Biggs, Mrs Kemble, Miss Perry.
- 1800-1. *Add* to names on pp. 241-2, Duncan (died January 1801), Egan, Grant, Hallion, Hunter, Toms, Mrs Duncan, Miss Duncan, Mrs Turpin.
- 1801-2. Grant, Mattocks, Rock, Turpin, C. M. Young, Woods (last season), Miss Biggs, Miss and Mrs Duncan, Mrs Turpin, Miss Walstein. Mrs Ward.
- 1802-3. Hallion, Jones, Mullender, Rock, Roberts, Turpin, Toms, C. M. Young, Mrs Charteris, Miss Duncan, Mrs Ward.
- 1803-4. *Add* to names on p. 247, Berry, Roberts, Toms, Ward, Mrs Brereton, Mrs Berry, Mrs Evatt, Mrs Turpin, Mrs Willoughby.
- 1804-5. *Add* to names on p. 248, Toms, Willoughby, Mrs Brereton.
- 1805-6. *Add* to names on p. 249 and top of p. 250, Watson, Wrighton, Rock, Mrs Berry, Mrs Willoughby, Mrs Turpin.
- 1806-7. *Add* to names on p. 251, Barker, Vining, Watson, Hallion, Trueman, Mrs, Miss, and Miss K. Charteris, Mrs Nicol, Mrs Walton.
- 1807-8. See page 253.
- 1808-9. Archer (heavy), Berry, Barker, Dalton, Dwyer, Evatt, Jones (utility), Power, Putman (May 31st 1809, D. L.), Rock, Sowerby (December 26th), Trueman, Vining, Wheatly (lead, 26th November, T. R., Bath), Mrs Beverley (Nov. 26th, T. R., Bath), Mrs Berry, Miss and Miss K. Charteris, Mrs Edwin (lead, T. R., Dub.), Mrs Nicol, Mrs W. Penson, Miss Rock, Mrs Vining, Miss Walton (heavy).
- 1809-10. (NEW THEATRE ROYAL). Archer, Berry, Barker, Duff, Jones, Kelly (low com., Nov. 14th, Man'r.), Kent (light com., November 16th, D. L.), W. H. Murray, Mason (November 14th, L'pool), Mountfort, M'Namara, Putman (juvenile lead), Power, H. Siddons, D. Terry (lead, November 29th, L'pool), Vining, Villars, Mrs Berry, Miss Fenwick, Mrs M'Namara, Mrs Nicol, Mrs W. Penson, Mrs Power, Mrs H. Siddons, Mrs Stanfield, Mrs Vining, Mrs Young.

- 1810-11. Kelly, Mountfort, Putman, Vining, and Villars *left*; *add* Anderson and Halliwell; Miss Fenwick and Mrs Vining *left*.
- 1811-12. Mrs Young *left*; Eyre, Mrs Anderson, Mrs Eyre *joined*; remainder same as last.
- 1812-13. *Add* to names on p. 267, Anderson, Bromley, Barker, Grant, Halliwell, W. H. Murray, Mason, Neville, Trueman, Mrs Bromley, Miss Douglas, Mrs Halliwell, Mrs M'Namara, Mrs and Miss Nicol, Miss Stanfield.
- 1813-14. Archer, Adcock (November 22nd), Anderson, Bromley, Barker, Chippendale (July 25th 1814), Duff, Eyre, Finn, Halliwell, Jones, Lacy (July 25th 1814), W. H. Murray, Mason, Munro (November 25th, Brighton), Russell (low com.), H. Siddons, Trueman, Mrs Bromley, Mrs Chippendale, Miss Douglas, Mrs Eyre, Mrs Halliwell, Mrs Nicol, Miss Stanfield, Mrs H. Siddons, Mrs W. Penson.
- 1814-15. Anderson, Mr and Mrs Halliwell, Mason, and Munro *left*; Bristow, Edwards, Melville, Mullender, Putman, Penson, Mrs Cummins, Mrs Moss, *joined*; remainder the same.
- 1815-16. Adcock, Alexander (utility, November 18th), Benson, Bristow, Barker, Chippendale, Crook, Duff, Eyre, Finn (heavy), Jones, W. H. Murray, Mason, Melville, Putman, Russell, Trueman, Mrs Belfield, Mrs Berry, Mrs Cummins, Miss Dyke, Miss Douglas, Mrs Eyre, Mrs Moss, Mrs and Miss Nicol, Mrs W. Penson, Mrs H. Siddons, Miss Stanfield.
- 1816-17. *Add* to names in cast of *Guy Mannering*, p. 275—Alexander, Benson, Barker, Trueman, Mrs Eyre, Mrs Macnamara, Mrs Moss, Miss Nicol, Mrs Stanton.
- 1817-18. Alexander, Anderson, Benson, Barker, Chippendale, Crook, Duff, Edwards, Jones, W. H. Murray, Mason, Putman, Russell, F. Yates, (February 16th), Mrs Cummins, Miss Dyke, Miss Decamp, Mrs Eyre, Mrs Moss, Mrs Nicol, Miss Nicol, Mrs Renaud, Mrs H. Siddons, Miss E. Stanfield.
- 1818-19. *Add* to cast of *Rob Roy*, p. 286-7—Barker, Calcraft, Jones, Yates, Mrs Cummins, Miss Dyke, Mrs Eyre, Mrs Mackay, Mrs H. Siddons, Miss E. Stanfield.
- 1819-20. *Add* to names on p. 293—Anderson, Bell, Duff, Denham, M'Grigor, Mrs Cummins, Mrs Eyre, Mrs Mackay, Mrs and Miss Nicol, Mrs Renaud, Miss Stanfield.
- 1820-1. *Add* to cast of *Antiquary*, p. 296, Alexander, Huckel, Loveday, Power, Stanley (low com.), Terry, Weekes (Irish parts, &c., February 12th, T. R., Dub.), Mrs and Miss Eyre, Mrs W. Murray, Mrs Mackay, Mrs H. Siddons, Miss Stanfield.
- 1821-2. *Add* to cast of *Montrose and Lammermoor*, pp. 297-8, Anderson, Hillyard, Mason, Power, Stanley, Weekes, Mrs Cummins, Mrs Eyre, Miss Murray (no relation to the manager), Mrs Mackay, Mrs W. Murray, Miss and Misses J. and M. Nicol, Miss Stanfield.
- 1822-3. *Add* to cast of *George Heriot*, p. 306, Duff, Faulkner, Hillyard, Jones, Mason, Power, Vandenhoff (lead. 6th January, T. R., L'pool), Weekes, Miss Halford, Miss Murray, Mrs Mackay, Miss Nicol, Misses J. and M. Nicol.
- 1823-4. *Add* to cast of *Ivanhoe*, pp. 307-8, Jones, Vandenhoff, Mrs Mackay, Mrs Nicol, Mrs Stanley.
- 1824-5. *Add* to casts on pp. 311 and 312, Ebsworth, Jones, Power, Mrs Berry, Miss and Mrs Eyre, Miss Mason, Mrs Mackay, Mrs Nicol, Mrs Stanley.
- 1825-6. *Add* to cast of *Woodstock*, p. 318, Armstrong, Lynch, Power, Stanley, Thorne, Vandenhoff, Villars, Mrs Berry, Mrs Brudenell, Miss Bristow, Mrs and Miss Eyre, Miss and Miss C. Murray, Mrs, Miss, and Miss J. Nicol, Miss Noel, Mrs Renaud, Mrs Stanley, Miss and Miss E. Villars, Mrs Wilton.
- 1826-7. *Add* to cast of *Gilderoy*, p. 319, Armstrong, Ebsworth, Felton, Jones, Lynch, W. H. Murray, Rayner, Stanley, Thorne, Vandenhoff. *Ladies* same as last year, *except* Mrs Brudenell, Misses Nicol, and Mrs Villars, *left*, and Miss Fairbrother, and Miss Tunstall, *joined*.
- 1827-8. *Add* to cast of *Charles Edward*, p. 323, Campbell, Clifton, Ebsworth, Felton, Ferguson (November 19th, T. R., Glas.), Hambleton, James, Jones, Mathews (heavy),

- Power, Stanley, Thorne, Vandenhoff, Weekes. Ladies *same* as last year *except* Mrs Walton, *left*, and Miss Gray, *joined*.
- 1828-9. *Add* to names on pp. 324-5, Rae, Mrs Berry, Mrs Eyre, Miss and Miss S. Fairbrother, Miss Mason, Mrs Stanley, Miss Tunstall.
- 1829-30. Barton, Denham, Hart, Hooper, Larkin, Mackay, Mathews, Murray, Power, Pritchard, Rae, Stanley, Montague Stanley, Vandenhoff, Williams, Mrs Evans, Mrs and Miss Eyre, Miss Fairbrother, Miss Jarman, Miss Murray, Mrs Nicol, Miss Pincot, Mrs Renaud, Mrs H. Siddons, Mrs Stanley, Miss Tunstall.
- 1830-1. *Add* to names on p. 350, Denham, Hooper, Jones, Mackay, Power, Pritchard, Roberts, Stanley, Mrs Eyre, Miss Fairbrother, Miss M. Murray, Miss Turpin, Mrs Stanley.
- 1831-2. Diddear (lead, July 2nd, 1830, C. G.), Faucit, Gardner (low com.), Mackay, Mason, Martyn (bass, October 3rd, Bristol), Murray, Power, Powell (heavy, October 4th, York), Pritchard, Peddie, Roberts, Stanley, Ternan, White, Miss Byfeld, Mrs Eyre, Miss Fairbrother, Mrs Faucit, Mrs Aaron Hill, Miss Jarman, Miss Mason (lead), Miss Murray, Mrs Nicol, Miss Newton (soubrette), Mrs Stanley.
- 1832-3. Barrett (heavy), E. Edmunds, Faucit, Lloyd (low com., October 1st, T. R., Glas.), Lacy, Mason, Murray, Mackay, Pritchard, Peddie, Power, Roberts, Ternan, Miss Byfeld, Mrs Eyre, Mrs Faucit, Miss Hartley, Miss Jarman, Miss Mason, Miss Murray, Miss Newton, Mrs Nicol.
- 1833-4. Balls (light com., October 7th, D.L.), Barrett, Jones, Lloyd, Mackay, Murray, Peddie, Roberts, Montague Stanley, Power, White, Miss Byfeld, Mrs Eyre, Miss Gilbert, Miss Hartley, Miss Jarman, Mrs Macnamara, Miss Newton, Mrs Nicol.
- 1834-5. Addison (old man), Balls, Barker (tenor), Coveney, Faucit, Frampton, Graham, Gough, Harrington (heavy), Lloyd, Mackay, Murray, Maddocks, Power, Roberts, Montague Stanley, Miss Byfeld, Miss and Misses J. and E. Coveney, Mrs Faucit, Miss Fairbrother, Mrs Hield, Miss Hartley, Misses Mattley, Miss Nicol, Miss Newton, Miss Novello, Miss Rankley (lead, November 8th, T. R., Exeter).
- 1835-6. Bedford (tenor), Binge (tenor), Bishoff (bass), George Cooke (old men), Daly (Irish com.), George Ellis (walking gent.), Edmunds (utility), George Fisher, Faucit, Graham, Lloyd, Mackay, Murray, Power, Peddie, Montague Stanley, Misses J. and E. Coveney, Misses Ebsworth, Miss Fairbrother, Mrs Fisher (lead), Miss Gossop, Mrs Hield, Misses Mattley, Miss Newton, Miss Nicol, Miss Novello, Mrs Turnbull.
- 1836-7. Barry (old men), Crisp, Fisher, Graham, Gourlay (utility), Manvers (tenor), Mackay, Murray, Nimmo, Power, Roberts, Roxby (light com., 12th November), Montague Stanley, Smythson, Lloyd, Mrs Parsons Crowe, Miss E., H., and J. Coveney; Mrs Crisp, Miss Ebsworth, Miss Lucy Fisher, Miss P. Horton, Mrs Manvers (heavy), Miss Nicol, Miss Newton, Miss Vining, Mrs Turnbull.
- 1837-8. *Add* to cast of *Merry Wives*, p. 372—Barker, W. H. Crisp, Nimmo, Rae, Miss and Misses H. and J. Coveney, Miss Julia Cruise, Miss Ebsworth, Miss Newton, Mrs R. Power, Miss Saunders, Mrs Turnbull.
- 1838-9. Crisp, Cunningham (walking gent.), Euston, Gourlay, Hayes (Irish com.), Lloyd, Mackay, Murray, Nimmo, Pritchard, Power, Skerrett, Mrs Bushe (late Miss Noel), Mrs Crisp, Miss Julia Cruise, Miss Ebsworth, Miss Fairbrother, Mrs and Miss Griffiths, Miss Nicol, Miss Newton, Mrs Stanley, Mrs Turnbull, Miss Wallack.
- 1839-40. *Add* to cast of *Oliver Twist*, p. 376—Euston, Gourlay, Horton (walking gent.), Mackay, Pritchard, Rae, Mrs Brookes (heavy), Mrs Crisp, Miss Ebsworth, Miss Newton, Mrs Skerrett, Mrs Turnbull.
- 1840-1. *Add* to names on p. 378-9—Crisp, Euston, Grainger (old men), Horton, Howard (walking gent.), Mackay, Murray, Rae, Mrs Crisp, Misses Ebsworth, Miss Julia Smith, Mrs Tellett (soubrette), Mrs Turnbull.

- 1841-2. See pp. 382-3.
 1842-3. Anderson, Sam Cowell, H. Corri, Crisp, Eburne, W. Howard, Edmund Glover, Leigh, Lloyd, Murray, Melrose, Power, Ray, Sullivan, Mrs Brookes, Mrs S. Cowell (late Miss Ebsworth), Miss M. Ebsworth, Mrs Leigh, Miss Clara Lee, Miss Macfarlane, Miss Nicol, Mrs Tellett, Mrs Turnbull, Miss E. Montague.
 1843-4. Same as last *except* Crisp, Melrose, Power, Sullivan, Clara Lee, and Miss E. Montague, *left*; Josephs, *joined*.
 1844-5. *Add* to names on p. 392, Bedford (walking gent.), Couldock (heavy), Eburne, Glover, Gourlay, Honey, Josephs, Leigh, Lester, Lloyd, Melbourne (low com.), Murray (appeared only at end of season), Melrose, Ray, Wyndham, Miss Davis, Miss R. Isaacs, Miss Gilbert, Miss C. Lee, Mrs Leigh, Miss Macfarlane, Mrs Turnbull.
 1845-6. *Add* to names on p. 395, Bedford, Clifford (tenor), Eburne, Josephs, Maynard, Miss Ebsworth, Mrs Reynolds.
 1846-7. *Add* to names on p. 397, Birch (heavy), Josephs, Melrose, Ray, Vaudrey (walking gent.), Vivash, Miss Conner, Miss Harriet Coveney, Mrs Josephs, Miss and Miss E. May, Miss Vivash.
 1847-8. *Add* to names on pp. 400-1 Carroll, Eburne, Miss Rose Dewar, Mrs Josephs, Miss May, Mrs Tellett, Mrs Turnbull, Miss Vivash.
 1848-9. James Bennett (lead), Carroll, Alfred Davis (light com.), Josephs, Kimber, T. King (heavy, from the Victoria), Lloyd, Murray, Vaudrey, H. Vivash, Henry Webb (low com.), Wilkins (old men), Wyndham, Miss and Miss H. Coveney, Mrs W. H. Eburne, Mrs Josephs, Miss Nicol, Miss Parker, Miss Vivash, Miss and Miss J. Weems.
 1849-50. Carroll, Channing (utility and scene painter), Cooper (old men), Danvers, Eburne, Josephs, Kimber, T. King, Murray, T. Powrie, F. A. Robinson (walking gent.), Vaudray, H. Vivash, H. Webb, G. Webster (heavy and Scotch), Wyndham, Miss Cleaver, Miss Frankland (lead, B'ham), Mrs Josephs, Miss Nicol, Miss Parker, Mrs Turnbull, Miss A. Vining (walking lady), Miss Vivash.
 1850-1. W. Cooper, Channing, Carroll, Halford, Josephs, Kimber, Lyons, Lacy, Murray, Powrie, F. A. Robinson, Romer, Horatio Saker, Herman Vezin, Wyndham, H. Webb, G. Webster, R. Younge, Miss J. Bassano, Miss Cleaver, Miss Frankland, Mrs Josephs, Miss Nicol, Miss Parker, Mrs Rough, Mrs Saker, Miss Weems, Miss E. Weems, Miss Kate Kerby.

No. III.

LIST OF THEATRE ORCHESTRAS FROM 1810 TO 1855.

- 1810-11 to 1813-14. W. Penson, leader; twelve musicians.
 1814-15. W. Penson, leader; James Dewar,* first violin.
 1815-16. W. Penson, leader; Haggart, first violin; James Dewar, principal second violin.
 1816-17. James Dewar, leader; Haggart, principal second violin; Henderson, flute; Fraser, oboe; twelve musicians.
 1817-18. James Dewar, leader; W. Napier junr., first violin; Haggart and J. Simpson, second violins; Simpson, violoncello; John Dewar, tenor and clarionet; T. Fraser, oboe; Henderson, flute; M. and A. Napier, horns; Hunter, contra-basso; Platt, bassoon.

* He appears to have been in the Orchestra during the season 1811-12.

- 1818-19. Same.
- 1819-20. Same, except Cameron instead of Haggart, second violin ; Macleod instead of John Dewar, tenor and clarionet ; and J. instead of A. Napier, second horn.
- 1820-1. Same, except bassoon is wanting, and J. Napier, junr., takes trumpet.
- 1821-2. Same, except bassoon is added, Platt playing it ; Macleod only plays tenor ; Spindler, clarionet.
- 1824-5. James Dewar, leader ; Muller, first violin ; Stewart and Miller, second violins ; Cameron, viola ; Simpson, violoncello ; Spindler, clarionet ; Platt, flute ; Henderson, oboe ; Keyser and R. Napier, horns ; W. Napier, trumpet ; Hunter, double bass ; M'Donald, bassoon.
- 1825-6. Same, except that Haggart is mentioned as leader along with Dewar ; Master Spindler is added to the second violins.
- 1826-7. R. B. Stewart and Pindar (from Bath), leaders ; remainder same.
- 1827-8. Pindar, leader ; Wilkinson, deputy leader ; Miller, first violin and keeper of music ; Davis and Master Spindler, second violins ; Cameron, viola ; Hancox, violoncello ; Spindler, clarionet ; Platt, flute ; Kielbach, oboe ; Messrs Keyzer, horns ; Napier, trumpet ; Hunter, double bass ; M'Donald, bassoon.
- 1828-9. Same, with the exception of Miller, whose place was not refilled.
- 1829-30. Same.
- 1830-1. James Dewar, leader ; Wilkinson, deputy leader ; Murray, first violin ; Menzies, Wells, and Davis, second violins ; Cameron and Miller, violas ; Hancox and L. Shepherd, violoncellos ; Henry and Simpson, double basses ; Platt, flute ; E. Shepherd and Kielbach, clarionets ; M'Donald, oboe ; Day and Anderson, bassoons ; Keyzer and Webb, horns ; Napier, trumpet ; and Hughes, trombone.
- 1831-2. The second violoncello and double bass, the oboe, and one second violin are absent ; and M'Donald now takes first bassoon ; Day, second bassoon ; others same as previous season ; total, eighteen.
- 1832-3. James Dewar, leader ; Wilkinson, deputy ; Murray, first violin ; Menzies and Davis, second violins ; Cameron and Miller, violas ; Henry, double bass ; Platt, flute ; Shepherd and Kielbach, clarionets ; M'Donald, bassoon ; Keyzer and Percival, horns ; Napier, trumpet.
- 1833-4. A. M'Kenzie now takes the second viola ; Rudolph, the second horn ; and Hughes, trombone, is added ; others same as previous season.
- 1834-5. Wilkinson,* leader ; Murray, deputy leader ; Wells, first violin ; Menzies and Davis, second violins ; Cameron, viola ; Cooke, violoncello ; Henry, double bass ; Platt, flute ; M'Leod and Kielbach, clarionets ; M'Donald, bassoon ; Kieser and Fraser, horns ; Napier, trumpet.
- 1835-6. Strings same, except Mackenzie, first violin, in place of Wells ; Boase, first clarionet ; M'Leod, second clarionet ; Mancor, bassoon ; Hoffman, second horn ; remainder the same.
- 1836-7. Same.
- 1837-8. Musgrave,† leader ; others same as previous season.
- 1838-9. Musgrave, leader ; there is only one first violin, played by Mackenzie ; Farmer, first clarionet, instead of Boase ; remainder the same.
- 1839-40. Musgrave, leader (only till January 25th, when James Dewar returned) ; Chapman added as another first violin ; Davis, senr., took double bass in place of Henry ; remainder the same.
- 1840-1. James Dewar, leader ; remainder the same.
- 1841-2. Farmer now takes oboe instead of clarionet ; Hanson, clarionet ; second clarionet is not engaged ; remainder the same.

* Wilkinson was an Irishman by birth, and evidently a clever musician. He played the piano in addition to the violin.

† Musgrave seems to have been a good musician, but not very steady. His wife was a miniature painter

- 1842-3. Pein joined as oboe ; remainder the same.
- 1843-4. James Dewar, leader ; Mackenzie and Chapman, first violins ; Menzies and Davis, junr., second violins ; Cameron, viola ; Cooke, violoncello ; Davis, basso ; Platt, flute ; Farmer, clarionet ; Pein, oboe ; Mancar, bassoon ; Kieser and Hoffman, horns ; Miller, trumpet.
- 1844-5. Wind and brass same ; R. B. Stewart, deputy ; and the third first violin away ; Menzies not engaged ; Davis, junr., and Moore being second violins ; and drums are added, played by Jackson, junr. This was James Dewar's last season at the Royal.
- 1845-6. Alex. Mackenzie, leader ; R. B. Stewart, deputy ; Menzies, first violin ; Moore and M'Donald, second violins ; Cameron, viola ; Cooke, violoncello ; Davis, double bass ; Platt, flute ; Farmer, clarionet ; Pein, oboe ; Mancar, bassoon ; Kieser and Hoffman, horns ; Miller, trumpet ; Jackson, drums.
- 1846-7. May and Howard,* junr., take the second violins ; H. L. Spindler, double bass ; and the drums are not used ; remainder the same ; Spindler also acted in the capacity of chorus master.
- 1847-8. The two horns and the trumpet are absent, and two cornets, played by Miller and Hoffman, substituted ; Howard takes first violin instead of Menzies, who takes second violin, assisted by Shaw ; remainder the same.
- 1848-9. Howard not re-engaged ; remainder the same.
- 1849-50. Same, with the addition of a trombone.
- 1850-1. Same.
- 1851-2. Alex. Mackenzie, leader ; Jewson and W. Howard, first violins ; Menzies and Frank Mackenzie (brother of Alex. Mackenzie), second violins ; Hanson and Cameron, violas ; Cooke, violoncello ; J. and A. Wallace, double basses ; Platt, flute ; James Owen, clarionet ; Pein, oboe ; Mancar, bassoon ; Wilson and J. Hamilton, horns ; Harper and Hoffman, cornets ; M'Fadden, trombone ; G. B. Loveday,† drums.
- 1852-3. Alex. Mackenzie, leader ; W. Howard, first violin ; F. Mackenzie and Lawrence, second violins ; Cameron and Smally, violas ; remainder the same, except Menzies, who does not appear.
1853. Summer season under Wyndham, R. B. Stewart, leader.
- 1853-4. Alex. Mackenzie, leader.
- 1854-5. Alex. Mackenzie, leader ; G. Loveday, librarian ; sixteen in all.

* William Howard, son of the actor, afterwards took the Waterloo Rooms, and gave Saturday Evening Concerts in Edinburgh.

† Afterwards well known as Toole's Business Manager.

I N D E X.

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